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G.M.Bongard-Levin

MAURYAN INDIA

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G. M. BONGARD-LEVIN

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FOREWORD

I have been asked to write the Foreword to the English edition of Dr. Bongard-Levin's book on the Mauryan India. However, he needs no introduction to scholars of early Indian history, his papers on Buddhism, Ancient India and on Central Asia being already familiar through translation.

The present work has the distinction of being one of the very few detailed studies on ancient Indian history which in recent years have been translated from the original Russian. As such it has the added interest that it provides an example of contemporary scholarship from the U.S.S.R. in the field of Indian history and a glimpse into an area of Indological research which is otherwise, by and large, unavailable to most Indian scholars.

This study of the Mauryan period attempts to encase as it were, Mauryan history in the wider perspective of what happened both prior to it and subsequently. The core of the study discusses the social and economic changes which occurred during the Mauryan period. What Dr. Bongard-Levin has to say on the much debated questions of the Slave Mode of Production, the Asiatic Mode of Production and Feudalism or his description of the early Indian village community will doubtless remain controversial; nevertheless, he has not only painstakingly put together a large body of evidence from the sources of the early period on these themes but has also introduced us to some new ideas emanating from Soviet studies of the ancient societies of Asia.

Dr. Bongard-Levin's work is meticulous in its utilisation of all available sources. This is most evident in his discussion of Mauryan chronology and in the developments in the history of Buddhism particularly in his co-ordination of the data relating to sectarian rivalries. In the last decade or so, new evidence on Mauryan history has been limited, coming mainly from a few

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more Aśokan inscriptions in Greek and Prākrit. Most of the work is therefore of an interpretational nature, some relating to the history of the period and some to the better known major sources, such as the *Kauṭilya Arthaśāstra*.

It is heartening therefore to see that in spite of the paucity of new evidence there is still considerable scope for fresh perspectives on Mauryan history. One hopes that there will be more available to us in translation of the work of Dr. Bongard-Levin and his colleagues.

New Delhi

Romila Thapar

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CONTENTS

	Introduction	1
I	**Sources and their Historical Interpretations**	16
II	**Milestones of Political History**	56
	1. North India in the 6th-4th Centuries B.C.	56
	2. Candragupta and the Formation of the Mauryan Empire	71
	3. The Mauryan Empire under Aśoka	81
	4. Problems of Mauryan Chronology	87
	5. The Fall of the Empire	90
III	**Economic and Social Development in the Mauryan Period**	117
	1. Indian Economy in the Latter Half of the First Millennium B.C.	117
	2. Land Ownership	138
	3, Social Structure of Early India	154
	4. Specific Features of the Caste Organisation in Monarchies and Republics	187
IV	**The Administrative System of the Mauryan Empire**	239
	1. The Frontiers of the Empire	239
	2. The Central Administration—The Authority of the King, the Pariṣad and the Sabhā	247
	3. The Taxation System	259

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4. The Municipal Administration 266
5. Provincial Administration and its Characteristics 271
6. Gaṇas and Saṅghas in the Mauryan Epoch : Sources and Problems 286

V Religious and Philosophical Trends 325

1. The Rise of Reformation Doctrines 325
2. Buddhism and Aśoka's Religious Policy 340
3. The *Dharma* of Aśoka's Edicts and the Dharmavijaya Policy 362
4. Orthodox Teachings and Cults and the Philosophical Schools 369

Select Additional Bibliography 412

Index 417

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ABBREVIATIONS

ABORI	*Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute*
AcO	*Acta Orientalia*
AI	*Ancient India*
Anab.	*Anabasis* of Arrian
Ang.—N.	*Aṅguttara-Nikāya*
AO,	*Archiv Orientálni*
Āpastamba	*Āpastamba Dharmasūtra*
ARASI	*Annual Report of the Archaeological Survey of India*
Arth	*Arthaśāstra*
Baudhāyana	*Baudhāyana Dharmasūtra*
BDCRI	*Bulletin of the Deccan College Research Institute*
BEFEO	*Bulletin de l'Ecole Francaise d'Extreme-Orient*
Bigandet vol. I, vol. II.	P.A. Bigandet, *The Life or Legend of Gaudama the Buddha of the Burmese*, vol. I-II Rangoon, 1866
Bṛhaspati	*Bṛhaspati-smṛti*
BS	*Buddhist Studies*, ed. by B.Ch. Law, Calcutta, 1931
BSO(A)S	*Bulletin of the School of Oriental (and African) Studies*
CHI	*Cambridge History of India*, vol. I. "Ancient India", London, 1922
CII	*Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*—A. Cunningham, *Inscriptions of Aśoka*, vol. I, Calcutta, 1877
CII. I	E. Hultzsch, *Inscriptions of Aśoka—Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, vol. I, New Edition, Oxford, 1925
CII, III	J.F. Fleet, *Inscriptions of the Early Gupta Kings and Their Successors*, Calcutta, 1888
Dīp.	*Dīpavaṃsa*
Div.	*Divyāvadāna*

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DKA	F. Pargiter, *The Purāṇa Text of the Dynasties of the Kali Age*, Oxford, 1913
Dīg.-N.	*Dīgha-Nikāya*
DPPN	G.P. Malalasekera, *Dictionary of Pali Proper Names*, vols. I-II, London, 1960
EI	*Epigraphia Indica*
Ext. Mah,	*Extended Mahāvaṃsa*
EW	*East and West*
EZ	*Epigraphia Zeylanica*
Gautama	*Gautama Dharmasūtra*
IC	*Indian Culture*
IHQ	*Indian Historical Quarterly*
DI	*Istoriya i kultura drevnei Indii* [History and Culture of Ancient India] (collection of papers), Moscow, 1963
Ind.	*Indica* of Arrian
Ind. Ant.	*Indian Antiquary*
Ind. Arch.	*Indian Archaeology. A Review Istoriya buddisma v Indii, History of Buddhism,* [*History of Buddhism in India*], sochinenie Daranathy, translated from Tibetan by V. Vasilyev, St. Petersburg, 1869
J.	*Jātakas*
JA,	*Journal Asiatique*
JAOS,	*Journal of the American Oriental Society*
JASB,	*Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*
JASL,	*Journal of the Asiatic Society Letters*
J. Bom. BRAS,	*Journal of the Bombay Branch, Royal Asiatic Society*
JBORS,	*Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society*
JBRS,	*Journal of the Bihar Research Society*
JBTSI,	*Journal of the Buddhist Text Society of India*
JESHO,	*Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*
JIH,	*Journal of Indian History*
JNSI	*Journal of the Numismatic Society of India*
JOIB	*Journal of Oriental Institute of Baroda*
JPrASB	*Journal and Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*
JPTS	*Journal of the Pāli Text Society*

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JRAS	*Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain*
Kangle, I.	R.P. Kangle, *The Kauṭilīya Arthaśāstra*, Pt. I, A critical edition with a glossary, Bombay, 1960
Kangle, II.	R.P. Kangle, *The Kauṭilīya Arthaśāstra*, Pt. II, An English translation with critical and explanatory notes, Bombay, 1962
Kangle, III.	R.P. Kangle, *The Kauṭilīya Arthaśāstra*, Pt. III, A study, Bombay, 1965
Kātyāyana	*Kātyāyana-smṛti*
KI	*Kasty v Indii* [*Castes in India*] (collection of papers), Moscow, 1965
KSINA	*Kratkie soobshcheniya Instituta narodov Azii* [*Brief Reports of the Institute of the Peoples of Asia*]
Mah.	*Mahāvaṃsa*
Maj.-N.	*Majjhīma-Nikāya*
Manu	*Mānava Dharmasāśtra*
MASI	Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India
Mbh.	*Mahābhārata*
MiRE	Minor Rock Edict
MjPE	Major Pillar Edict
MjRE	Major Rock Edict
MKAN	*VII Mezhdunarodnyi kongress antropologicheskikh i etnograficheskikh nauk* [*7th International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences*]
MKV	*Mezhdunarodnyi kongress vostokovedov* [*International Congress of Orientalists*]
MR	*Modern Review*
NAA	*Narody Azii i Afriki* [*Peoples of Asia and Africa*]
Nārada	*Nārada-smṛti*
Pap.	*Papañcasūdani*
PTS	*Pāli Text Society*
PV	*Problemy vostokovedeniya* [*Problems of Oriental Studies*]
RE	Rock Edict
RO	*Rocznik Orientalisytyczny*
Sam	*Samantapāsādikā*
Saṃ.-N.	*Samyutta-Nikāya*
Sār.	*Sāratthapakāsinī*
SBE	*Sacred Books of the East*

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Schwanbeck	E.A. Schwanbeck, *Megasthenes' Indica*, Bonnae, 1846
SE	Sovetskaya etnografiya (Soviet Ethnography)
SI	D.C. Sircar, *Select Inscriptions Bearing on Indian History and Civilization*, vol. I, Calcutta, 1942 (2nd ed., Calcutta, 1965).
SKPAW	*Sitzungsberichte der königlich preussische Akademie der Wissenschaft*
SpE	Special Edict
Sum.	*Sumaṅgalavilāsinī*
SV	Sovetskoe vostokovedeniye (Soviet Oriental Studies)
UCR	*University of Ceylon Review*
UZMOPi	Uchenye zapiski Moskovskogo oblastnogo pedagogicheskogo instituta (Proceedings of Moscow Regional Pedagogical Institute).
Vam.	*Vaṃsatthappakāsinī*
Vasiṣṭha	*Vasiṣṭha Dharmasūtra*
VDI	*Vestnik drevnei istorii* [*Bulletin of Ancient History*]
VI	*Voprosy istorii* [*Problems of History*]
Viṣṇu	*Viṣṇu Dharmasūtra*
VP	*Vinaya-Piṭaka*
Woolner ATG. I-II,	A. Woolner, *Aśoka Text and Glossary*, vols. I-II, Calcutta, 1924
WZ	*Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Südund Ostaiens*
Yājñavalkya	Yājñavalkya-smṛti
ZDMG	*Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenlandischen Gesellschaft*
ZII	*Zeitschrift für Indologie und Iranistik*

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INTRODUCTION

THE MAURYAN period constitutes a distinctive landmark in the history and cultural development of India. In the present work this epoch is taken to represent both the reigns of the Mauryan kings, and the broader historical period which corresponds to the second half of the first millennium B.C. The period was marked not only by the blossoming of culture and arts, the growth of the economy and increased contacts with other countries, but also by the formation of a unified state, the first in India's history, which incorporated a greater part of the Indian sub-continent and some adjacent regions. It is no accident that the lion capital of the Sarnath column, bearing the edicts of the Mauryan king Ashoka inscribed over two thousand years ago, has become the national emblem of the Republic of India.

It was in the Mauryan period that the basic features of the social structure, the *varṇa* and caste system, and major institutions of ancient Indian society and State emerged and took shape. A number of religious and philosophical trends developed, including Buddhism, which was gradually transformed from a sectarian monastic teaching into one of the world's three great religions.

For over a century, scholars in different countries have been examining this significant period of ancient Indian history but to this day many problems are still unsolved and some historical events even remain practically unknown.

There is a growing volume of scientific literature on the subject.* Nevertheless, each new book dealing with India of the Mauryan period attracts the close attention of scholars, is

*The author had to refrain from making a separate list of publications used, which considerably exceeds the list of references. More than 500 special studies deal with the interpretation of the Aśokan edicts alone. The literature on the history, religion and philosophy of Buddhism is truly enormous, as is the literature on other problems of the history and culture of the Mauryan period.

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discussed, reviewed, seriously analysed and subjected to justified or unjustified criticism.

The author is well aware that this book too may not escape critical judgement from specialists in Indian studies;* he is far from regarding this work as fully complete, and feels that some conclusions are only preliminary and, in some cases, insufficiently documented. Even some essential problems could not have been examined with consistent thoroughness (sometimes they are merely outlined or described in most general terms). Moreover, the sources available to the student of this period are very limited and chances of discovering new documents are extremely uncertain. The author is, of course, fully responsible for all errors and shortcomings which reviewers may discover. On the other hand, if merits are found in the book, he must share them with his colleagues, including scholars from India and Sri Lanka who have helped him with advice and placed the latest literature on the subject at his disposal.

The author is especially grateful to the reviewers of the book *Ancient India* (1969), which he co-authored with G.F. Ilyin.** Their remarks and suggestions were duly noted in preparing this work for publication. Availing himself of this opportunity, the author expresses his profound gratitude to the well-known Indian scholar, Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya, who published a collection

*After this book was published in Russian, a number of reviews appeared both in the USSR and abroad. See articles by G.F. Ilyin in *Voprosy istorii* (*Problems of History*), 1974, pp. 481-486; I.D. Serebryakov in *Narody Azii i Afriki* (*Peoples of Asia and Africa*), No. 6, 1974, pp. 177-181; S.I. Korolyov in *Sovietskaya etnografiya* (*Soviet ethnography*) No. 1, 1975, pp. 179-181; G. Fussman in *Journal Asiatique*, 1974, pp. 481-486; G. Glaesser in *East and West* Vol. 24, Nos 1-2, 1974, pp. 182-189; L. Sternbach, *JAOS*, Vol. 95, No. 1, 1975, p. 146; Y Filipsky "Archiv Orientalni" Vol. 45, 1977, pp. 363-364.

The author is very grateful to his reviewers for their valuable comments which he has tried to take into account when preparing the book for an English version.

**To I.D. Serebriakov *Narodi Azii i Afriki* (*Peoples of Asia and Africa*) No. 2, 1971 Ye. M. Medvedev and M. Schetelich of the German Democratic Republic *Vestnik drevnei istorii* (*Bulletin of Ancient History*) No. 3 1972, B. Ya. Voltchok *Sovetskaya etnografiya* (*Soviet Ethnography*) No. 1 1972, G. Fussman (*T'oung Pao*, Vol. 52, Livr. 1-5 1972), L. Sternbach, (*JAOS*, Vol. 93, Pt. III 1973).

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of articles on ancient India,* which will enable scholars in other countries, above all in India, to gain a first-hand knowledge of the author's conclusions on major problems of Mauryan India, and may stimulate new scientific discussions.

The beginning of studies on Mauryan India can be linked with the name of William Jones (1746-1794), who is often referred to as the "Father of Indology."[1] He is credited with the founding of the Asiatic Society in Calcutta (the Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1784). He translated from Sanskrit some monumental works of ancient Indian literature, made use of epigraphic and numismatic material, established a scientific basis for studying ancient Indian religions and reconstructed the chronological order of some historical events, etc. He also called upon historians to utilise various ancient Indian sources, mythological texts and dramas which, he believed, contained valuable facts as, for instance, the murder of the ruler Nanda and accession of Candragupta[2] to the throne. To date the latter event, he turned to the evidence of the *Purāṇas*, the *Kathāsaritsāgara* by Somadeva (11th cent.) and other later sources.[3] It is of course true that the date of Candragupta (57 B.C.) proposed by Jones was less accurate than that advanced by the French scholar, Joseph de Guignes (303 B.C.).

William Jones is generally considerded as having been the first to identify the Mauryan king Candragupta of the Indian sources with King (Sandrokottos) of the Greek authors. Indeed, in his report to a session of the Asiatic Society of Bengal (1793), he suggested the identification of Candragupta with the Greek Sandrokottos[4] although Joseph de Guignes had come to the same conclusion much earlier—in 1772[5] (The *Histoire de l' Acadèmie Royale des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* had apparently not reached Calcutta, where Jones worked). This conclusion, arrived at independently by both scholars, was highly significant, as it made it possible to link together the evidence of classical and Indian sources.[6]

Dealing with problems of historical geography, Jones advanced a hypothesis that contemporary Patna was identical with

*G.M. Bongard-Levin, *Studies on Ancient India and Central Asia*, (Soviet Indological Series), Culcutta, 1971.

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the ancient Pāṭaliputra of Indian sources and Palibothra of classical authors.[7] Strange enough, the French geographer J. Rennel expressed the same view in 1788.[8]

The way in which William Jones studied the problems of ancient Indian culture had a powerful impact on the development of European and, above all, British Indology.[9] The works of W. Robertson occupy a place of importance among historical studies undertaken in the 18th century. His book on Greek and Roman evidence concerning ancient India provoked particular interest;[10] it showed the Indian contribution to the development of sciences and literature, and noted that in ancient India the level of science in some fields was higher than that in Europe, a very bold conclusion for a period when Europo-centrism was dominant.[11]

Similar ideas were advanced by Henry Colebrooke, one of W. Jones' disciples.[12] He is credited with important observations regarding ancient Indian religions including early Buddhism and Jainism.

A significant role in the history of Indian studies was played by Charles Wilkins and Horace Wilson, who translated numerous works of Sanskrit literature and began systematic studies of religion and mythology. These provided valuable material for researchers on the development of ancient Indian culture, including the culture of the second half of the first millennium B.C.[13]

Studies of the Mauryan period in particular and of ancient India in general underwent a veritable revolution after James Prinsep had read the Aśokan edicts written in Brāhmī and Kharoṣṭhī scripts. All previous attempts to read them had failed. W. Jones, in his own words, was driven to despair since he was unable to decipher their contents.[14] However, as far back as 1781, Charles Wilkins had managed to decipher some Pāla inscriptions written in late Brāhmī script.

James Prinsep began his decipherment with bilingual inscriptions on the coins of Indo-Greek rulers of North-West India. He was able to read some letters of ancient Brāhmī (which he then called the Pāli script; Kharoṣṭhī was termed as the Bactrian script). He then turned to short inscriptions on the Sanchi *stūpa* and, presuming their votive nature, pointed out that it was possible to read the word in the final part of the inscriptions as

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dānasa (gen. sing. of *dānaṃ*, "gift", "offering"). This enabled him to read some other letters of the inscriptions on the so-called Delhi-Toprā column. Soon he was able to decipher the other letters of an alphabet previously unknown to him,[15] and could understand the contents of all the Aśokan edicts discovered by that time.

Prinsep had initially thought that the inscriptions related to king Tissa, a ruler of Ceylon. However, the discovery of the inscriptions of Daśaratha, a grandson of Aśoka, who, like his grandfather, was known as *devānaṃpiya* ("the beloved of the gods"), and G. Turnour's study of Ceylonese chronicles, made him change his view and associate the inscriptions with the Mauryan king Aśoka. In the II Rock Edict he read the name of Antiyoke (Antiochus), which he identified first with Antiochus III, ruler of Syria,[16] and later with Antiochus I or Antiochus II. In the Girnar version of the XIII Rock Edict, he read three names—Turamayo, Antakana, Maga—and suggested a connection between the first of them and Ptolemy II Philadelphus, the ruler of Egypt;[17] and Antigonus Gonatas was subsequently linked with the king of Macedonia, and Magas, with the king of Cyrene.

Thus new facts emerged concerning the political history of the Mauryan Empire, its contacts with other countries and the chronology of Aśoka's reign.

The works of J. Prinsep laid the basis of historical and philological research in India.[18] In 1877, Alexander Cunningham in his book gave texts and translations of the Aśokan inscriptions formerly published by J. Prinsep, H. Wilson, E. Burnouf, G. Bühler, and briefly analysed the content and language of the inscriptions[19]. E. Senart, an outstanding French specialist in Indian studies, published in the early 1880's the first volume, and in 1886 the second volume, of his study of the edicts of the Mauryan king.[20] From the late 1870's G. Bühler, a brilliant expert on Indian epigraphy, regularly published articles for almost twenty years.[21] We also need mention the works on this subject by H. Kern, T. Rhys Davids, G. Grierson and J. Fleet.[22]

The setting-up of the Archaeological Survey of Northern India had a great impact on the study of ancient India. Archaeologists and art experts, headed by A. Cunningham, soon succeeded in finding numerous sites and settlements, which they indentified with names mentioned in written sources. They also discovered

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Buddhist monuments, including those in Bodh-Gayā and Bhārhut, and new epigraphic and numismatic data. The well-known works of A. Cunningham, *Bhilsa Topes* (1854), *The stupa of Bharhut* (1879), *Ancient Geography of India* (1879), described some monuments of the Maurya age. The excavations in Patna (Paṭaliputra), begun at the end of the 19th century by L. Waddell[23] and continued by D. Spooner[24] were particularly valuable. They provided evidence which made it possible to check the information contained in classical and Chinese sources on the ancient capital of the empire and to gain an insight into Mauryan culture.

The publication of Buddhist texts played an important part in the research into the period concerned. Such texts provided abundant material not only on the history of the religion and its doctrine, but also on the ideology of the Mauryan period as a whole. E. Burnouf included translations of a number of northern Buddhist legends about Aśoka in his *L'Introduction à l'histoire du bouddhisme indien* (1876), and H. Kern endeavoured to compare the evidence of the Buddhist sources with the edicts of the Mauryan king.[25]

In the 19th century, chapters dealing with the Mauryas began to appear both in general works on Indian history and in publications dealing with specific aspects of the ancient period. The authors of these studies generally focused their attention on facts of political history and culture, but did not generally concern themselves with matters of social structure and state organisation.[26] The prominent European scholar Ch. Lassen was among the first to have used data from epigraphy, numismatics and literature to reconstruct the social and political structure of ancient India.[27] His four-volume study[28] is valuable to this day.

Vincent Smith's *Aśoka*,[29] published in 1901, may be regarded as the first European study on the Mauryas. It also attempted to characterise the state system of the Empire. Apart from other data, the author used evidence of Ceylonese chronicles and late Indian literary sources. Another work by V. Smith, *The Early History of India*, which appeared in 1904,[30] was also important. Feeling that the key to many problems of religion and culture should be sought in the events of dynastic history, Smith paid special attention to the activities of such rulers as Alexander the Great, Candragupta and Aśoka.[31]

In the 1920's and 1930's the number of works on the subject

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greatly increased. Among publications of texts and translations of the Aśokan edicts, we would particularly like to mention those by A. Woolner[32] and E. Hultzsch.[33] The work of the latter—the first volume of the *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum* – includes the text and translation of the Mauryan king's inscriptions as well as detailed notes. Although several decades have passed since the publication of this important work, its value is still undiminished. Articles by the American Indologist T. Michelson with their philological analysis of many of the Aśokan edicts[34] also deserve special mention.

The growing interest in Buddhism gave rise to numerous works examining the evidence of Buddhist sources concerning Aśoka and his activities (reference may be made, for example, to the book by J. Przyluski).[35]

The year 1922 saw the publication of the *Cambridge History of Ancient India*, which contained chapters dealing with the political history, social organisation and culture of the Mauryan Empire written by the distinguished British Indologists F.W.Thomas and E. Rapson.

The major success in this field was achieved by scholars in France (S. Lĕvi, A. Foucher, J. Bloch), Germany (B. Breloer), Austria (O.Stein), and Belgium (L. de la Vallée-Poussin, who published a special work on Mauryan history).[36]

Among recent publications on the subject, particular mention may be made of the works of W. Ruben (German Democratic Republic), L. Alsdorf and F. Wilhelm (Federal Republic of Germany), P.H.L. Eggermont (Holland), A.K. Warder (Canada), J. Filliozat and A. Bareau (France), K.R. Norman (Great Britain). Works dealing with Aśoka's reign also appeared in the United States,[37] Poland,[38] and Czechoslovakia.[39]

Serious research into the Mauryan period began in India in the second half of the 19th century. Bhagawanlal Indraji and Rajendralal Mitra, who published many epigraphic documents and new manuscripts, made important contributions to the study of the subject. The former produced some interesting works on the Aśokan edicts,[40] and the latter publications and translations of evidence from northern Buddhist literature.[41] R.G. Bhandarkar (1837-1925), who is justly regarded as the founder of Indian historical science, gave in his works the history of ancient India a place of importance. One of his first works covered the period

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from the formation of the Mauryan state to the decline of the Gupta Empire.[42]

From the end of the 19th century up to the 1930's, owing to the upsurge of the national liberation movement, interest in her own history, was growing in India. The growth of national conciousness prompted a number of Indian scholars to raise their voice against the Europocentric concepts which characterised some works of European Indologists. These works viewed ancient India through the prism of well-studied European civilisation. The ancient Indian culture was also examined in relation to the established patterns of Greek culture, while specific phenomena encountered by scholars were interpreted as India's digressions from the general laws of historical development. To ancient Indian society was attributed backwardness and stagnation, supposedly characteristic of all Oriental civilisations.

However, the struggle against Europocentric trends sometimes led to another extreme : the exaggeration of the peculiarity of India's historical development, contrasting her culture with other cultures and idealising her past. Such trends, especially radical in the period of intensified anti-colonial movement, were to be seen, for instance, in the works on the state system of ancient India and the Mauryan Empire by K.P. Jayaswal and R.K. Mookerji.[43]

This period was also marked by numerous publications and works on various aspects of the history and culture of Mauryan India. The Aśokan edicts were translated into different Indian languages.[44] D. Bhandarkar and S. Majumdar jointly prepared a new edition of the inscriptions.[45] Interesting works on Mauryan epigraphy were published by B.M. Barua, S.N. Mitra and K. P. Jayaswal.[46] Books were published dealing with the reign of Candragupta[47] and Aśoka (D.R. Bhandarkar, *Aśoka*, 1925, and R.K. Mookerji, *Aśoka*, 1928), problems of political history (H. Raychaudhuri *Political History of Ancient India*, 1923), the state system (R. Dikshitar, *The Mauryan Polity*, 1932), and culture and religion.

After India won independence, a new stage in the study of the country's ancient period began. The following collective studies were widely acclaimed : *Age of the Nandas and Mauryas* (edited by K.A. Nilakanta Sastri), *The Mauryas and Sātavāhanas* (second volume of *A Comprehensive History of India*), *The Age of Imperial*

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Unity (second volume of the ten-volume *History and Culture of the Indian People*). The works on the history of political ideas by U.N. Ghoshal and B.A. Saletore, on the state system by A.S. Altekar, and on South India by Nilakanta Sastri aroused keen interest. We should note here the works of B.M. Barua, which contained a historical interpretation of the Aśokan edicts, the brilliant publications of epigraphic evidence by D.C. Sircar, the numerous editions and translations of Aśokan inscriptions,[48] the works of M.A. Mehendale on their philological analysis, and the critical remarks, translation and studies of the *Arthaśāstra* made by R.P. Kangle, etc.

History of Dharmaśāstra, a work in several volumes by P.V. Kane, is a veritable encyclopaedia of life in ancient India. It contains a whole mass of material covering various aspects of social and state structure. Special mention should be made of the work by R. Thapar : *Aśoka and the Decline of the Mauryas* (1961, 2nd ed. 1973), which has been highly acclaimed by West European and Soviet specialists. It covers political history along with the problems of the state system, social relations and ideology. At present, Indian historians' interests are changing towards studying the problems of socio-economic development. The important works by D.D. Kosambi, Dev Raj Chanana and R.S. Sharma illustrate this trend. Another interesting work by N.N. Kher, has appeared recently, *Agrarian and Fiscal Economy in the Mauryan and Post-Mauryan Age* (Delhi, 1973).

The Russian school of Indology has made a significant contribution to the study of the history and culture of the Mauryan period. Of particular importance are the works of I.P. Minayev, the founder of the Russian school of Indian studies, and above all his classic work *Buddhism : Studies and Materials* (*Buddhizm. Issledovaniya i materialy*, St. Petersburg, 1887), which examined in detail the earlier stages of the history of that religious teaching, problems of Buddhist councils, the chronology of the canon, etc.

I.P. Minayev regarded Buddhism as a broad-scale historical and cultural phenomenon which had made a great impact on many aspects of ancient Indian life. He was also among the first to attempt to associate specific events in the history of Buddhism with certain landmarks in politicāl history.[49] He noted the importance of the Aśokan inscriptions for studying Buddhism.[50] S.F. Oldenburg, another prominent expert on ancient Indian culture,

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also stressed the value of the edicts, "which for all their simplicity and lack of sophistication are remarkable literary evidence. Indian epigraphy has since produced nothing else like them." He characterised King Aśoka as "the great architect of the Indian land."[51]

Some aspects of the cultural development of ancient India were also touched upon in the works of V.P. Vassiliev and F.I. Stcherbatsky, who specialised in Buddhism.

Soviet scholars achieved remarkable successes in the studies of ancient Indian society. We should name, first of all, the works of A.M. Osipov, V.S. Vorobiev-Desiatovsky, G.F. Ilyin and E.M. Medvedev, in which many cardinal problems of socio-economic and cultural development are raised. However, Soviet historical literature still lacks comprehensive works on the Mauryan period.

On the whole, although both European and Indian scholars have taken great pains to study this period, even today a number of important problems remain unsolved, and, in many cases, are insufficiently substantiated or incorrectly covered.

More often than not, important aspects of the society and state of ancient India are regarded only as a reflection of the activities of kings, whose personalities are considerably idealised (see, for example, the works by R.K. Mookerji and P.L. Bhargava on Candragupta, and those by V. Smith, J. Macphail and F. Kern on Aśoka). The emphasis is sometimes laid on the religious and missionary activities of Aśoka. He is pictured as a "humble Buddhist monarch", whose figure "stands out like some great Himalayan peak, clear against the sky, resplendent in the sun, while the lower and nearer ranges are hidden by the clouds."[52]

Although problems of the political history of ancient India in the second half of the first millennium B.C. have been studied most fully, its major landmarks, the conditions which facilitated the rise of Magadha and the formation of the Mauryan Empire, the chronological order of events and the reasons for the fall of the Mauryan state have not yet been fully illuminated (primarily due to lack of evidence).

As noted above, scholars have paid special attention to problems of the state system of the Mauryan Empire; nevertheless, many aspects of the system of administration, questions concerning specifics of the king's authority, preservation of archaic features of the political organisation, the state's role in the economic and

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social fields as well as some problems pertaining to the emergence in ancient India of republics and their political structures require further investigation.

Similarly, questions relating to economic and social development in ancient India including ownership of land, social structure, nature of socio-economic relations, the varṇa and caste system, etc., have yet to be thoroughly researched into.

Problems of ideology and cultural development are of equal significance. Researchers are not unanimous in their interpretation of Aśoka's religious policy, the *Dharma* of his edicts, the authenticity of the Third Buddhist Council and the reasons for the success of Buddhism in the pre-Mauryan and Mauryan periods. Other influential religious and philosophical schools, problems of the interrelation of Buddhism with orthodox Brahmanism, Jainism, and the Ājīvika doctrine, the reasons for the spread of Bhāgavatism in the late-Mauryan period, the emergence of Viṣṇuism and Śhaivism usually remain outside the scholars' field of vision. Studies of the Mauryan culture also raise such questions as the proportion of indigenous and foreign elements in its formation, the cultural heritage from the earlier periods and its impact on the further development of culture, etc.[53]

The analysis of the source of the Mauryan period, which will establish the credibility of the evidence, adopt an integrated approach to epigraphic and literary evidence, and institute a comparison between different categories of sources to reveal synchronised information has now assumed special significance. In other words, students of the Mauryan age now face the task of relating the period to the major problems of historical and cultural development of ancient Indian and ancient Eastern societies.

Notes and References

1. See S. N. Mukherjee, *Sir William Jones : A Study in Eighteenth-Century British Attitudes to India*, Cambridge, 1968, p. 7.
2. See S. N. Mukherjee, *Sir William Jones...*, p. 106.
3. In particular, the drama by Banesvara Bhattacarya *Candrābhiṣeka* (18th cent.), which told of attempts by Cāṇakya and Śakaṭāra to overthrow king Nanda and enthrone Candragupta Maurya. The drama was based on an ancient tradition, which probably dated back to the Prakṛt writing of Guṇāḍhya's *Bṛhatkathā*.

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4. See W. Jones, "On Asiatick History, Civil and Natural", *Asiatick Researches*, Vol. 4 1793, pp. 1-17.
5. J. de Guignes, Reflexions sur un livre indien intitule Bagavadam, *Histoire de l' Académie Royale des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, avec les Mémoires de Litrérature*, t. 38, Paris, 1772, pp. 312-336. J. de Guignes proceeded from the French translation of the *Bhāgavata-Purāṇa* made by the Tamil scholar M. Pillai in 1769 who transcribed many Sanskrit words in the Tamil manner. The name of Candragupta assumed the form Sandragouten, which helped de Guignes to compare it with Sandrokottos of classical sources.
6. Earlier attempts to identify Sandracottos, mentioned in classical sources, with a specific Indian ruler were unsuccessful. A. Dow, for example, identified him with king Kanauj, who ruled later (see A. Dow, *The History of Hindostan*, vol. I, London. 1768, p. 10).
7. See W. Jones, On Asiatick History..., *loc. cit.*, pp. 10-11.
8. It is significant that in his work he refers to W. Jones' opinion. For the possibility of such an identification, see S. N. Mukherjee, *Sir William Jones*.., p. 106.
9. See I.D. Serebriakov, *Ocherki drevneindiiskoy literatury* [*Studies in Ancient Indian literature*], Moscow, 1971; G. Bearce, *British Attitudes towards India 1784-1858*, Oxford, 1961.
10. W. Robertson, *An Historical Disquisition Concerning the Knowledge Ancients Had of India and the Progress of Trade prior to the Discovery of the passage to it by the Cape of Good Hope*, London, 1971.
11. R. Thapar, 'Interpretations of Ancient Indian History', *History and Theory*, Studies in the Philosophy of History, Vol. 7, No. 3, 1968.
12. See D. Kopf, *British Orientalism and the Bengal Renaissance* (*The Dynamics of Indian Modernization 1773-1835*), Calcutta, 1969, p. 3.
13. For more details, see E. Windisch, *Geschichte der Sanscrit-Philologie und Indische Altertumskunde*, Bd I, Strassburg, 1917; Bd II, Berlin-Leipzig, 1920.
14. See S.N. Mukherjee, *Sir William Jones*. . ., pp. 109-111.
15. A. Sen, *Aśoka's Edicts*, Calcutta, 1956, p. 7.
16. J. Prinsep, 'Discovery of Name of Antiochus the Great in Two of the Edicts of Aśoka, King of India', *JASB*, vol. 7, 1838, p. 156-157.
17. J. Prinsep, 'On the Edicts of Piyadasi, or Aśoka, the Buddist Monarch of India, Preserved on the Girnar Rock in the Gujarat Peninsula, and on the Dhauli Rock in Cuttack; with the Discovery of Ptolemy's Name therein, *JASB*, vol. 2 1838, pp. 219-282.
18. *See* F. R. Allchin, 'Ideas of History in Indian Archaeological writing: a Preliminary Study' in *Historians of India, Pakistan and Ceylon* ed. by C.H. Philips Oxford, 1961.
19. Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum, Vol. I, Inscriptions of Aśoka, prepared by A.Cunningham, Varanasi, 1961.
20. E. Senart, *Les inscriptions de Piyadasi*, t. I-II, Paris, 1881 and 1886. G. Grierson translated these works of E. Senart into English and supplemented them with commentaries and necessary elaborations.

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21. Articles by G. Bühler were published in *Ind. Ant.* (1877-1891), *EI*, (1892-1899) and *ZDMG* (1883-1894).
22. The detailed bibliography on the Aśokan inscriptions compiled by M. A. Mehendale makes it unnecessary for us to refer here to works on specific edicts and the interpretation of terms and words (M.A. Mehendale, *Aśokan Inscriptions in India*, Bombay, 1948).
23. L. A. Wadell, *Discovery of the Exact Site of Aśoka's Classic Capital of Pāṭaliputra*, Calcutta, 1982; by the same author; *Report on the Excavation at Pāṭaliputra*, Calcutta, 1903.
24. D.B. Spooner Mr. Ratan Tata's Excavations at Pāṭaliputra, *Annual Report of the Archaeological Survey of India*, Delhi, 1912-1913.
25. H. Kern, *Der Buddhismus und seine Geschichte in Indien*, Leipzig, 1882 (Bd. I) and 1884 (Bd II).
26. In this sense, the most informative work was written by R. Fick, *Die sociale Gliederung in nordöstlichen Indien zu Buddha's Zeit*, Kiel, 1897, in which, on the basis of Buddhist literature and above all *Jātakas*, the author studied matters of social relations, the caste system and economic development of the ancient India.
27. A. L. Basham in *Historians of India...*, *loc. cit.*, pp. 261-266.
28. Chr. Lassen, *Indische Altertumskunde*, Bd I-IV, Leipzig-London, 1847-1861.
29. V, Smith, *Aśoka* : *The Buddhist Emperor of India*, London, 1901. The book by E. Hardy was published in 1902, but it was intended for the general reader (E. Hardy, *König Aśoka* Mainz, 1902).
30. V. Smith, *The Early History of India. From 600 B.C. to the Muhammadan Conquest including the Invasion of Alexander the Great*, Oxford, 1904.
31. For more details, see A.L. Basham, in *Historians of India...*, *Loc. cit.*
32. Woolner, *ATG*, I-II.
33. *CII*, I.
34. They were published in *JAOS*, for 1909-1920.
35. J. Przyluski, *La légende de l'empereur Aśoka* (*Aśokā-vadāna*) *dans les textes indien et chinois*, Paris, 1923.
36. L. de la Vallée Poussin, *L'Inde aux temps des Mauryas*, Paris, 1930.
37. N. A. Nicam and Richard McKeon, *The Edicts of Aśoka*, Chicago, 1959.
38. E. Sluczkiewicz, *Oredzia krola Asioki*, Warszawa, 1964.
39. J. Filipsky, J. Vacek, *Aśoka*, Praha, 1970.
40. *See*, for example: Bh. Indraji, 'The Inscriptions of Aśoka, *Ind. Ant*, vol. 10, 1881, pp. 105-109; by the same author, Antiquarian Remains at Sopārā and Padana,' *J. Bom. BRAS*, vol. 15, 1882, pp. 282-288.
41. See, for example, Rajendralal Mitra, *The Sanskrit Buddhist Literature of Nepal*, Calcutta. 1882.
42. R. G. Bhandarkar, 'A Peep into the Early History of India from the Foundation of the Mauryan Dynasty to the Fall of the Imperial Gupta Dynasty,' *J. Bom. BRAS*, vol 20, 1900, a separate edition was published in Bombay in 1920).
43. K.P. Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*, Patna, 1924 (3rd ed., Bangalore, 1955; references are to the 3rd edition); R. K. Mookerji, *Local Government in*

5929

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44. Charuchandra Basu, Lalitmohan Kar, *Aśoka-Anuśāsana*, Bengali translation, Calcutta, 1915; Ramavatar Sarma, *Priyadarśi-Praśastayah* in (Devanagari, with Sanskrit and English Renderings), Calcutta, 1917; Janardan Bhatta, *Aśoka ke Dharmalekha* (in Devanagari, with Sanskrit and Hindi Renderings) Delhi, 1923.
45. D. R. Bhandarkar, S. N. Majumdar, *The Inscriptions of Aśoka*, Calcutta, 1920. Bhandarkar is the author of a number of papers and articles on Mauryan epigraphy.
46. *See* M. A. Mehendale, *Aśokan Inscriptions*.
47. Purushottam Lal Bhargava, *Candragupta Maurya*, Lucknow, 1935; see also R.K. Mookerji, *Candragupta Maurya and his Times*, Delhi, 1943 (4th ed., Delhi 1966; references are to the 4th edition).
48. G. Srinivasa Murti, A.N. Krishna Aiyangar, *Edicts of Aśoka*, 2nd ed., 1951; R. Basak, *Aśokan Inscriptions*, Delhi, 1957; D.C. Sircar, *Inscriptions of Aśoka*, Delhi, 1957; S. Bhattacharya, *Select Aśokam Epigraphs*, Calcutta, 1960.
49. For more details, see G.M. Bongard-Levin, O.F. Volkova : 'I. P. Minayev kak buddolog' [I. P. Minayev as a Buddhologist], in *Ivan Pavlovitch Minayev* ed. by G. Y. Kotovsky Moscow, 1967.
50. See I. P. Minayev, *Buddhizm, Issledovaniya i materialy* [*Buddhism, Research and Documents*], vol. I, series 1-2, St. Petersburg, 1887. Minayev believed that the Aśokan inscriptions "present a number of invaluable data for studies of the development of the Buddhist doctrine and for the history of the Buddhist canon" (p. 77). The abovementioned work was closely followed by a Russian translation of the Aśokan edicts made by V.V. Lesevich from E. Senart's publication. V.V. Lesevich wrote, "In the Aśokan edicts we have a historical source of great importance." (*See* V. V. Lesevich, 'Religioznaya svoboda po ediktam tsaria Asoki Velikogo' [Religious Freedom as Reflected in the Edicts of King Aśoka the Great'. *Voprosy filosofii i psihologii* [*Problems of Philosophy and Psychology*], Book I, Moscow, 1889).
51. S. F. Oldenburg, 'Indiiskaya literatura' [Indian literature], *Literatura Vostoka* [*Literature of the Orient*], series I, St. Petersburg, 1916, p. 13.
53. *See* J.M. Macphail, *Aśoka*, Calcutta, 1926, p. 1; Upendra Nath Ball, *Ancient India*, Calcutta, 1941, p. 123.
53. The present work has no separate chapter on the culture and cultural developmeut in the Mauryan period. Some of the aspects are dealt with in individual chapters. The reader may also refer to the chapter "Kultura magadhsko-mauriyskoi epokhi" ["Culture in the Magadha-Mauryan

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Period"] in the book by G.M. Bongard-Levin and G.F. Ilyin, *Drevniaya Indiya* [*Ancient India*] Moscow, 1969. Further reference should be made to the book by N. Ray (N. Ray, *Maurya and Śuṅga Art*, Calcutta, 1965) and to the relevant sections in *The age of Imperial Unity* (Bombay, 1951) and *A Comprehensive History of India* vol. II, (Calcutta, 1957).

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CHAPTER I

SOURCES AND THEIR HISTORICAL INTERPRETATION

STUDENTS OF Indian history and culture of the second half of the first millennium B.C. have a host of sources at their disposal. Epigraphy ranks first in importance among them. As compared to literary texts, it has a number of advantages, although its use too entails substantial difficulties.[1]

The Aśokan edicts found in many areas of India as well as outside the country are undoubtedly the most important source for the Mauryan period. So far, they remain the oldest and most precisely dated epigraphic records of India.

The existence of pillars with ancient inscriptions was known as far back as the Middle Ages,[2] but the Tughlug rulers had no idea as to who had used these mysterious characters or to the true nature of their content.

A chronicle of the period of Firoz Shah (*Tarikh-i Firoz Shahi*) records that on the order of the Sultan, two pillars were brought to his capital. To bring one of them, a huge cart with 42 wheels was specially built, and it hauled the stone monster from Meerut to Jamna. It was floated down the river and then carted to Delhi. The Sultan ordered it to be erected in a special room inside the citadel. From the way the chronicler described the erecting of the pillars, it may be deduced that their actual purpose had been forgotten and they were somehow linked with heroes of an epic.[3] The chronicle states that Firoz Shah ordered the pandits to read the inscriptions, and some of them "read" into them an order prohibiting the pillars to be touched until Firoz Shah became Sultan. The mystery of the inscriptions remained hidden up to the 1830's,[4] when James Prinsep finally succeeded in deciphering the Aśokan edicts.

These inscriptions have been studied by scholars for more than 130 years. Scientific literature on their philological and

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historical interpretation is truly enormous and it is correct to regard them as a special branch of Indian studies. Interest in them, however, is not waning. New edicts are being discovered, their publication and translations made, and numerous articles on individual inscriptions and interpretations of specific terms are being regularly published.[5]

The discovery in the Kandahar area of an Aramaic-Greek bilingual inscription of Aśoka,[6] a Greek version of his edicts[7] and an Indo-Aramaic inscription has proved to be epoch-making. They expand our knowledge of the political and cultural development during the Mauryan period and elucidate a number of controversial questions (in particular, the borders of the empire, location of some regions, etc.).

According to their content, character and chronology, the edicts are conditionally divided into several groups :

1. Inscriptions on rocks (Major and Minor Rock Edicts) ;
2. Inscriptions on pillars[9] (Major and Minor Pillar Edicts);
3. Cave Inscriptions.

The Aramaic inscriptions from Taxila[10] and Laghman as well as the abovementioned Kandahar inscriptions may be classified into a separate group.

Minor Rock Edicts—which are usually subdivided into Northern and Southern versions—are regarded by most scholars as the earliest known Aśokan inscriptions and are dated from the 7th-10th years after his coronation.[11]

The Rock Edicts group includes the so-called Kaliṅga edicts found in the territory of ancient Kaliṅga. Scholars believe that they were composed in the Mauryan king's eleventh regnal year.[12] The I-IV Major Rock inscriptions are dated from the 12th year, and the V-XIV from the 13th year after the coronation. So far there have been discovered 14 Major Rock Edicts, and they have reached us in several versions. The evidence of all these documents concerns the most varied aspects of the state and provincial administration, the foreign and domestic policies of the Mauryas, Aśoka's religious policy, the principles of *Dharma*, etc.

The three Cave Inscriptions record the donations made to the sect of the Ājīvikas. Two of them were engraved in Aśoka's 13th regnal year, and one in the 20th regnal year. In the same

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year the Lumbini inscription was engraved on a pillar. It records the king's pilgrimage to the birth-place of the Buddha. It is also of interest for the study of the taxation system. The Nigali-sāgar Pillar Inscription, which tells of the enlargement of the stūpa in honour of the Buddha Konākamana, is apparently dated in the same year.

The Major Pillar Edicts were engraved in the 25th-26th year after Aśoka's coronation. They provide data regarding the state administration, the functions of various officials, and the relationship between the king and members of different religious schools and sects.

The problem of dating the Minor Pillar Edicts is rather complicated. We agree with those scholars, who feel that they were engraved at the end of Aśoka's reign. These edicts have preserved substantial information on provincial administration and the king's religious policy.

All in all, over 150 Aśokan inscriptions have been found so far. This rich epigraphic collection provides scholars with extremely valuable material on various aspects of the state system of the Mauryan Empire, the nature of contemporary social structure, and the development of ideology and culture.

One must, however, take due note of the fact that the rescripts were made on behalf and by order of the king, and that they contain mostly official and often tendentious statements. Many aspects of life in the Mauryan state were not even indirectly dealt with by them.

However, some scholars still hold the traditional view that the edicts are purely religious documents. Such an approach hinders an objective analysis of the inscriptions and often leads to their one-sided interpretation. Comparison of Aśokan inscriptions with other sources, either contemporary or close in time, is particularly important, since it makes it possible to check the accuracy of the inscriptional evidence.

The three Cave Donative inscriptions of Dasaratha, a grandson of Aśoka, stating that the cave had been donated to the Ājīvikas, also belong to the Mauryan period. Two Prākṛt inscriptions in Brāhmī—one from Mahāsthan (Bengal) and the other from Sohgaura (Uttar Pradesh)—which describe state assistance to people who had suffered from natural calamities are noteworthy.

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Several inscriptions, considerably smaller in size than the Aśokan edicts, belong to the Śuṅga period. Two of them reveal the spread of Bhāgavatism and of the relations between the Śuṅgas and the Greek rulers in North-West India.

Apart from royal rescripts of various types, a certain number of votive inscriptions of the 3rd-1st cent B.C., which record offerings to individual monks, groups of monks, religious sects, etc., have reached us.

As has been pointed out earlier, the greater part of the Aśokan edicts were written in Brāhmī, which, as early as the 3rd century B.C., represented a fairly elaborate script system.[13] (Judging by the nature of the script of the edicts and other inscriptions of the Mauryan period, the art of writing had existed long before this period.) The manner of engraving the letters on stone (the most notable feature being their round shape) is an indication that the practice of writing on soft material has existed over a considerable period. But, unfortunately, specimens of such writing have not survived in the humid climate of India.

Two very interesting terracotta fragments representing people learning the Brāhmī alphabet (they hold in their hands a board covered with Brāhmī letters) are evidence of the spread of writing.[14]

North-West India and the provinces west of the Indus river, which were at one time part of the Achaemenid Empire, preserved the tradition of the Achaemenid chancellery—the use of the Aramaic script. As shown by Kandahar inscription, royal rescripts were written in the Aramaic script. The Prākṛt version was also written in this script. Kharoṣṭhī emerged from the Aramaic script under the influence of Brāhmī. For the population of Arachosia who spoke Greek, royal rescripts were translated into Greek.

The Buddhist text *Lalitavistara* (X. 125.19), dated from the first centuries A.D. (in A.D. 308 the text had already been translated into Chinese) lists over 60 scripts, both Indian and foreign. It is interesting that apart from Brāhmī and Kharoṣṭhī scripts used in some provinces (for example, Magadhalipi, Vaṅgalipi, etc.) are mentioned.

Almost all the Aśokan edicts were written in Prākṛts. An

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analysis of the royal rescripts led scholars to the conclusion that their texts were usually drafted in Pāṭaliputra, the capital of the empire, whence they were sent to various parts of the country, where local scribes often introduced into them vernacular words and expressions.

The Western provinces must have had scribes who knew the Prākṛts as well as the Aramaic language. Moreover, it can be presumed that the local population of that area spoke these languages and, possibly, Greek, too.

In comparison with Aśoka's period, the history of the early Mauryas is less investigated owing to the absence of dated sources. The only document datable to the early Maurya period is the preserved fragments of the *Indika* by Megasthenes,[15] a Seleucid ambassador at the court of Candragupta. According to Arrian (*Anab.* V.6.2), Megasthenes had been previously on the staff of Sibyrtios, satrap of Arachosia, and then, as recorded in the classical sources, was sent by Seleucus Nikator[16] to the first ruler of the Maurya dynasty. It would be natural to assume that this happened after the conclusion of peace with Candragupta.[17]

The value of the *Indika* for studying the Mauryan period lies in the fact that its author, who lived in Pāṭaliputra, had a first-hand knowledge of the state system of the Mauryan Empire. Nevetheless, his work has not been properly utilised in the examination of the early Mauryan period and has not been subjected to a correct critical analysis because of some of its peculiarities.

In describing India, the Seleucid envoy viewed many aspects of the country's social life in the light of institutions with which he was familiar and recorded events which he could either easily understand or which surprised him. Apparently he also made use of information from the oral tradition, interpreting it sometimes from the Hellinistic point of view. His work therefore, often contains a mixture of Greek and Indian concepts, fantasy and reality. This accounts for the sceptical attitude of some modern specialists towards his data, which, even in the ancient period,[18] received conflicting evaluations.

The *Indika* survived only in the form of fragments in texts by Greek and Roman anthors, who often quoted from Megasthenes. However, we are not always sure that they give the exact version of his words. From their records, it is known that there had existed four books of the *Indika*,[19] but none of them has survived.

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Therefore we cannot even visualise what the original scope of that work was. Judging by the extensive use of its contents, it can be presumed that the *Indika* was extremely popular in the classical world. It was referred to in their descriptions of India by Strabo, Diodorus, Arrian, Pliny, Solinus, Athenaeus, Clemens Alexandrinus and others. Sometimes they refer directly to Megasthenes; not infrequently, however, such references are missing, and each time researchers have to decide whether specific passages can be associated with him.[20]

In this context, a critical analysis of Megasthenes' account and its careful verification based on comparison with Indian sources acquire considerable importance. R.C. Majumdar was right in warning scholars against free and uncritical use of such evidence as is ascribed to Megasthenes. However, in some cases Majumdar himself underestimated the significance of Megasthenes' evidence.[21]

The question of the sources of the *Indika* deserves special attention. As ambassador, Megasthenes stayed in the imperial capital and therefore could make many observations. He noted correctly the peculiarities of the central administrative system, including the royal office. It is quite possible that he had some command of the vernacular or at least used the services of good interpreters, who helped him to describe in Greek some local notions and institutions.[22] This view is borne out by an analysis of Megasthenes' account and, in particular, of his information on the "seventh class" of ancient Indian society—he gave an absolutely exact expression in Greek terms of the content of such expressions as *rāja-sabhā* and *pariṣad*.[23]

The available evidence shows that the Seleucid ambassador learned from local informants details of customs, traditions and culture of his host country.[24] The surviving fragments of his work demonstrate his knowledge of some religious and philosophical trends and schools of the time.[25]

A study of the material concerning rural officials and different "classes" of ancient Indian society suggests that Megasthenes visited some of the provinces of the empire. (It is known that he came to Candragupta's court by taking the royal route from North-West India.) According to Arrian (Ind. I. 5), "Megasthenes did not travel over much of India, though, no doubt, he saw more of it than those who came with Alexander."

As mentioned above, along with authentic facts, the *Indika*

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contained many fictitious and, at times, altogether fantastic data. Obviously, its author accepted indiscriminately some data of the Indian tradition, which he could have collected from local pandits.[26]

In some cases, he followed the sources of the period of Alexander's invasion for example, Onesicritus), sometimes correcting such records and sometimes repeating them despite the fact that they were not authentic.

Unfortunately, we are not always able to distinguish clearly the authentic evidence of Megasthenes from what survived in the versions of classical writers, i.e., which was subject to later revisions. Greek and Roman authors sought to write only about events and facts which would appeal to the imagination of the general reader. Even Strabo, who, as a rule, accurately recounted the evidence of others, quite often quotes from Megasthenes in an abridged and revised form. Diodorus refers to the Seleucid ambassador to confirm his own observations and, quite naturally, could have omitted important remarks and facts. Arrian characterises much of the classical evidence on India in the following terms : "The falsity of the strange stories which have been fabricated about India will not be exposed by any one."[27]

To verify and evaluate Megasthenes' information, researchers have compared his account with Indian sources, and first of all, with the ancient political treatise *Arthaśāstra*, which is generally associated with the Mauryan period. At the same time, scholars have tried to solve the problem of dating the treatise attributed to Kauṭilya. In this respect the work of O. Stein, *Megasthenes and Kauṭilya*,[28] became widely known. Comparing these two sources, the author arrived at the conclusion that there is considerable difference between them in respect of the data they present. In his view, the *Arthaśāstra* reflected conditions other than those described by Megasthenes. Apart from O. Stein, other prominent scholars—J. Jolly,[29] A.B. Keith,[30] R. Dikshitar[31]— also sought to show the gross divergence between the data of Megasthenes and the *Arthaśāstra*. In his new study,[32] R.P. Kangle examines in detail the arguments of O. Stein and his supporters. Since the comparison of the information contained in the *Indika* with that of the *Arthaśāstra* is of great interest not only for source-study but also for a general study of Mauryan India, these arguments deserve special examination. According to O. Stein, the basic

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differences between the evidence of the two sources are as follows:

1. According to Megasthenes, Pāṭaliputra was surrounded by wooden walls, while Kauṭilya warned against the use of wood in construction (II.3). Kangle refers to the data of archaeological excavations which demonstrated that the fortifications around the capital were made of bricks. In his view, contemporary archaeological materials do not implicitly confirm Megasthenes' information, as the wooden constructions discoverd by Waddell were not part of a wooden rampart running round the entire city. Kangle writes: "The present text (of the *Arthaśāstra*) cannot be supposed to be describing the actual fortifications at Pāṭaliputra, even assuming that these corresponded to Megasthenes' description of them."

2. Comparison of the data on the use of metals shows that Kauṭilya's evidence points to a more advanced technique of metal-processing. J. Jolly wrote that Megasthenes had mentioned only five metals, whereas Kauṭilya knew of many metals and various methods of metal-processing.[33] However, as Kangle rightly points out, according to Megasthenes, Indians were in the know of "other metals" too. Classical authors, for example Curtius, mentioned various metal-processing methods.

3. The Seleucid ambassador refers in his work to rural officials (*agronomoi*) with a wide range of duties, whereas according to the *Arthaśāstra*, their functions were performed by different officials. Kangle objects to O. Stein's statement that Megasthenes had borrowed such ideas from Plato and stresses that the *Arthaśāstra* did not have in mind the administrative system prevailing in any particular kingdom.

4. Megasthenes speaks of six boards, each consisting of five members, which administered Pāṭaliputra, whereas no such information is given in Kauṭilya's treatise. It also does not list certain functions of the city officials, who were members of the boards. In defence of Megasthenes, Kangle cites information from classical authors regarding the administration of Nysa and points out again that the data of the *Arthaśāstra* do not relate to any particular city in a particular kingdom. He also examines J. Jolly's arguments concerning the differences between the *Indika* and the *Arthaśāstra* on the subject of taxation.[34]

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Comparison of these two sources was also made by Ramachandra Dikshitar, who concluded that it was impossible to depend on such an unreliable source as the work of Megasthenes, which contained very little useful evidence.[35] He was even against attempts to compare the Seleucid envoy's data with Indian evidence for, in his view, this was not a firm basis on which to build any meaningful conclusions.[36]

On the other hand, B. Breloer, who tried to show the credibility of Megasthenes' information in the light of the data of the *Arthaśāstra*, refers to many points of similarity (on land ownership, the position of slaves, etc.)[37] At the same time, like Stein's, his approach to the evidence of the two texts was not always critical and failed to take into account the dissimilar nature of the *Indika* and Kauṭilya's treatise.[38]

Evaluating Megasthenes' data as a whole, it should be remembered that his work is not a compilation of Mauryan history, but only an account of the author's impressions, whereas the *Arthaśāstra* is an abstract treatise on politics, a summary of advice to the king on how to rule his land. Moreover, selection of this treatise for comparison with the *Indika* is hardly justified, as it was compiled several centuries later.

It would seem more logical to compare the data of Megasthenes with those of Aśokan epigraphs which are closer in time, that is, with the Aśokan edicts. Both sources are the only dated evidence of the Mauryan period. Such a comparison shows that Megasthenes gave a correct description of some administrative and social institutions of Mauryan India and some aspects of spiritual life as they actually existed.[39] However, this comparative study of the *Indika* and the Aśokan inscriptions is also significant in that it makes it possible to view some problems of the history of Mauryan India in a new light.[40]

A student of the Mauryan period can hardly agree with R. Dikshitar, who refused to consider fragments of Megasthenes' work as a reliable source.[41] Equally unfair seems J. Jolly's view that the work of the Seleucid envoy was of far less value than the diaries of Chinese travellers.[42]

J. D. Derret justifiably reproaches many Indian historians who quoted from Megasthenes only to confirm their point of view and denied the importance of his data when such data were

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at variance with the Indian sources (even when they are of later origin and unobjective in nature.[43]

Interesting evidence about India has also been found in the works of other classical writers. During Alexander the Great's campaign, the Greeks observed for the first time the life and conditions of the Indian people and their culture. Tales were told of the campaign and scientific treatises were written about that land, chiefly of a geographical nature. (Unfortunately, these texts only survived in fragments in the writings of later authors.) The works of Nearchus, Aristobulus and Onesicritus contained information mainly on North-West India, but they also included data on the people and customs of Eastern regions. This material, especially when compared with Indian sources (early Buddhist literature, epics, the grammatical treatise of Pāṇini, etc.), enables us to draw some general conclusions about ancient Indian political and social organisations.

Among the classical writers who based their works on Megasthenes' account and on notes of direct participants in the Indian campaign, we should first of all name Arrian (2nd cent. A.D.). He is the author of the *Indika*, in which many fragments from the Seleucid envoy's writings are used, and the *Anabasis*, dealing with Alexander the Great's expedition. For his latter work Arrian used accounts by the participants in the campaign and all literature on Alexander known at the time.

The works of Strabo, Diodorus, Plutarch, Pliny, Curtius and Trogus (whose text has survived in Justin's rendering) are also of great import. Apart from the abovementioned works, these authors were in possession of some new data on India, which began to reach the West due to the expansion of Roman trade with the East.[44]

It is, of course, necessary to take into account the laudatory nature of most of these writings, They are focused on the figure of Alexander, glorified in every possible way for his brilliant victories over the "barbarians". However, in addition to panegyrical literature there had emerged also a clearly critical tradition, which can probably be traced as far back as Callisthenes, who had accompanied Alexander in his expedition to the East and was one of his court historiographers.[45] Cicero and Seneca, for example, held a negative view of the emperor and called him an invader, and even a robber. Curtius gave a rather contradictory evaluation

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of Alexander's activity in his work *History of Alexander* (*Historiarum Alexandri Regis Macedonum*).

The mediaeval cycle of Alexander was related to the classical tradition.[46] A novel about the emperor, known as *Pseudo-Callisthenes*, apppeared in Alexandria in the 3rd century A.D. The Greek text was later translated into Latin and Syrian (there were also Armenian, Ethiopian and other versions), and then some of its stories reached Persian and Arab writers.[47]

Particularly important among the sources for the history and culture of ancient India is the *Arthaśāstra*, already mentioned above. From the time the manuscript was discovered by the Indian scholar R. Shama Sastri early in the the 20th century, this work has up to the present time been the centre of attention for students of ancient India.[48] Such interest in the treatise is accounted for by its wealth of information about various aspects of ancient Indian life. It contains data on the state system, methods of administration, the king's policies, the judiciary system, aspects of economy, culture, etc.

The authorship of the treatise is attributed to Kauṭilya,[49] or Cāṇakya, an advisor to the Mauryan king Candragupta. The text concludes with a statement that the *śāstra* was composed by the person who owned "the land that was under the control of the Nanda kings". Hence, the traditional dating of the treatise was accepted by the majority of Indian scholars. The basic arguments in favour of referring the *Arthaśāstra* to the Mauryan period have already been cited by R. Shama Sastri.[50] According to Nilakanta, Sastri, one of the most prominent Indian scholars of our time, "that evidence is strong and remains unshaken in spite of everything that has been said to the contrary."[51] Following Shama Sastri, the early dating of the *Arthaśāstra* was also defended by T. Ganapati Sastri, who published the text and was the author of the notes on the treatise,[52] and by J. J. Meyer,[53] the translator of the *Arthaśāstra*, Sten Konow,[54] Otto Stein,[55] Berhard Breloer,[56] Nilakanta Sastri,[57] Ramachandra Dikshitar[58] and Krishna Rao.[59]

Advocates of this viewpoint usually refer to the Indian tradition concerning the victory of Candragupta and Cāṇakya (the latter is identified with Kauṭilya) over the Nandas, to the closeness of the numismatic data contained in the *Arthaśāstra* to the relevant evidence by Pāṇini, to the use by the author of the *Kāmasūtra* of the information in the treatise, and to the similarity between

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some of its terms and those of the Aśokan inscriptions and of Megasthenes' *Indika*.[60] They also refer to the *Arthaśāstra* as one of the sources of the *Laws of Manu*[61] and other *śāstras*.

Many European and some Indian scholars share another view, i.e. dating the treatise from the first century A.D. This dating was adopted by J. Jolly, H. Jacobi,[62] A.B. Keith,[63] H. Raychaudhury,[64] and a number of Soviet Indologists.[65] (Recently a hypothesis has been advanced that the *Arthaśāstra* was composed in the 1st[66] and the 3rd[67] cent. A.D.).

Contrary to the advocates of the former viewpoint, the supporters of a late dating have noted close similarity between the *Arthaśāstra* and the *Kāmasūtra* (not earlier than the 3rd cent.), as well as between some *sūtras* and *śāstras* (even between the *Yājñavalkya* and the *Śilpaśāstra*),[68] the absence in the treatise of any mention of Candragupta, the Mauryas or even Pāṭaliputra, and, in Megasthenes' work, of Kauṭilya.[69] References have also been made to the name of a coral from the land of Alasanda (believed to be Alexandria of Egypt, according to S. Lévi, this is an indicative of the compilation of the source later than the 1st cent.)[70] and to the name of Chinese silk (*cīnapaṭṭa*),[71] to terms borrowed from Greek in the Hellenistic period,[72] to the author's knowledge of Greek astronomy, and to the fact that Ceylon was called Pārasamudra and not Taprobane.[73] It was stressed that the treatise was written in Sanskrit but not in any of the Prakṛts (as were the texts of the Mauryan period),[74] and that its language was close to that of classical Indian literature and not to the language of Pāṇini and his commentators.[75] (The differences between the evidence of *Arthaśātra* and that of Megasthenes' *Indika* as shown by O. Stein[76] and other scholars have already been discussed. T. Burrow[77] and T. Trautmann have recently produced new evidence in favour of a later date for the compilation of the treatise). As far back as 1932, Academician S.F. Oldenburg wrote;[78] "Personally, I believe that the arguments of both sides are insufficiently watertight and convincing, and I think that, with our knowledge of Indian history still meagre, the question will still have to be considered open." Thirty years later, the same idea was expressed by Nilakanta Sastri, who said : "There is not and probably never will be, a general agreement about the date and authorship of the *Arthaśāstra*."[79] We should add that they continue to evoke lively arguments.

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Comparison of the date of the *Arthaśāstra* with the evidence of the dated sources made previously (Aśoka's edicts and fragments of Megasthenes' work) has enabled scholars to suggest that it would be legitimate to distinguish between ancient and later parts in the treatise. Thus they supposed that the second book was one of the earliest, since the data provided by this book are comparable with Megasthenes' evidence.[80] The statistical analysis of the text recently made by T. Trautmann confirmed this view. It showed that the second and third books had been written before the various parts were compiled into a single treatise on politics. There are data which also show that some parts (for example, the second part) existed as independent works even after the *Arthaśāstra* had assumed its final shape.[81]

Shama Sastri, followed by many other scholars, believed that the treatise was written by Kauṭilya (or Cāṇakya),[82] a minister of Candragupta Maurya. But as early as 1923, J. Jolly expressed doubts regarding this identification and E. Johnston maintained that Kauṭilya and Cāṇakya were different individuals.[83] Recently, this view has been convincingly substantiated by T. Burrow.[84] He refers to the Jaina text *Nandisūtta*, which distinguishes Cāṇakya (Cāṇakka) from Kauṭilya (Koḍillaya, Kauṭilya). (The *Arthaśāstra* is listed among the titles of Brāhmaṇical texts.)

Most Indian sources dealing with the activity of Candragupta speak of Cāṇakya, who is not mentioned anywhere as the author of the *Arthaśātra.* Only the *Purāṇas* link the activity of Candragupta to Kauṭilya, but according to T. Burrow, this was a result of the second revision of the text. In the period of compilation of the Purāṇic lists there was a theory identifying the author of the treatise, Kauṭilya, with the minister Cāṇakya.

P.V. Kane wrote at one time that the *Arthaśāstra* "on account of its careful arrangements of topics and unity of design impresses one as the product of a single brilliant mind."[86] Now, after the research made by T. Trautmann, it would be more correct to speak of the work as emanating from several, truly brilliant minds. Trautmann wrote that "what the *Arthaśāstra* loses by way of individuality it gains by synthesising the merits gained by generations of thinkers. In its impersonal and abstract way, it sums up ancient Indian beliefs about the state with an authority which no individual creation could possess."

That the parts of this work emerged at different times could

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probably be affirmed by the presence in the text of interpolations of clearly late dates, by different styles,[87] and the closeness of certain ideas and attitudes to those of the epics[88] and Pāṇini[89] and at the same time to those of later writings.[90] It is not ruled out that the *Arthaśāstra* and some other *śāstras* were based on one and the same tradition, and on one or several treatises on politics. This will explain the similarity of many ideas and provisions. Material borrowed from the treatise and its similarity to compilations of different periods may be accounted for by the fact that its ancient core (the original text) was apparently the creation of a political school as far back as the Mauryan period.[91]

It is specially stressed in the *Arthaśāstra* that it has been compiled "by bringing together as many treatises on the Science of Politics as have been written by ancient teachers" (I. 1). It quotes representatives of five political schools and fifteen writers. In the graphic expression of T. Trautmann, "the true 'author' of the Arthaśāstra is its predecessors,"[92] although the merit of bringing the texts together belongs probably to one person, who was apparently prominent expert in the field of political theory and practices of state administration.

According to scholars, the final editing was undertaken in the 3rd—4th centuries A.D. by Viṣṇugupta.[93] It is presumed that not only did he collect the various writings, but divided the text into chapters, and wrote the first and the last of them.[94] The treatise concludes with the following: "Seeing the manifold errors of commentators on scientific treatises, Viṣṇugupta himself compiled the Sūtra as well as the Bhāṣya."

One may assume that this writer (Viṣṇugupta, or somebody else) widely used the ancient work on politics written by Kauṭilya, a well-known authority on the political *śāstra*. That is apparently why he is quoted so often. Kauṭilya could be the author of other works as well, a supposition which prabably explains his prominence as "the creator of science for the kings."[95] His name is mentioned in many Indian writings from the first century A.D. onwards—in the *Pañcatantra* (approximately 3rd-4th centuries), *Kāmasūtra* (3rd-4th centuries), the Buddhist *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* (4th century), *Jātakamālā* (late 4th-early 5th centuries) and others. He is placed among the great thinkers of ancient India along with Pāṇini, Kātyāyana and Yājñavalkya.[96]

The *Arthaśāstra* is a distinctive practical treatise. It is far less

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influenced by religious dogmas than are other works of the Brāhmaṇical literature of *sūtras* and *śāstras*. This distinctiveness makes it a very valuable source for studying the state and social systems of ancient India.

It presents many economic and political ideas from a practical standpoint, and not from the point of view of "purely Brahmanical canons."[97] Moreover, its author sometimes contradicts the established tradition,[98] although on the whole, he did not, and of course could not, go beyond the framework of the religious concepts of the age he lived in.

The treatise is a testimony to the high level of the development of political thought and a weighty argument against those scholars who consider ancient Indian culture only from the point of view of orthodox Brāhmaṇism and Hinduism, and picture its creators as deeply religious people, indifferent to secular affairs.[99]

The *Arthaśāstra* appears to be a collection of advice and injunctions to kings for a better administration of their land. On the whole, the author draws an ideal picture, although he undoubtedly proceeds from phenomena which actually existed. One should take this into account when using its evidence.

Since the treatise has preserved many ancient concepts and ideas,[100] it can serve as an important source for studying the Mauryan period. It would also seem justifiable to use its data to confirm and illustrate events described in the dated documents of the same period, above all in epigraphy.[101] According to Nilakanta Sastri, "doubts regarding the age and genuineness of the work had not been allowed to hinder the *free* use of the book in studies on Mauryan administration and society" (emphasis added by the author).[102] A number of works on the Mauryan period do indeed suffer from an insufficiently critical approach to the *Arthaśāstra*.[103]

A scholar studying the Indian society of the second half of the first millennium B.C. may find interesting evidence in works of the *sūtra* and *śāstra* literature, including numerous treatises on various problems of religion, philosophy, politics, science and everyday life. They are all related to the *smṛti* category of texts.

Particularly, there are numerous works dealing with ritual—the *Kalpasūtras*. They are subdivided into *Śrautasūtras*, the earliest parts of the *sūtra* literature (800—400 B.C.), which provide information on cults and religion; *Gṛhyasūtras*—collections of injunctions on home rites[104] and ceremonies to be performed

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at different stages, and related to them, the *Dharmasūtras*—norms and rules of everyday life concerning also the status of man and different groups of population, their interrelation with authorities, some exposition of legal principles, etc. The *Dharmasūtras* reflected some elements of customary law and contained rudiments of legislative literature, which were then developed in the *śāstras*. This is the reason why writings of this kind are widely used for studying not only religion and cult, but also the social life of ancient Indians and the role and functions of the state. Scholars date them from the 6th-3rd centuries B.C., although this dating is open to doubt.[105] Judging by the *Māhabhāsya* (2nd century B.C.), of Patañjali the *Dharmasūtras* were regarded as highly authoritative writings.[106] *Āpastamba* and *Baudhāyana*, which contain important data on the state administration, are considered to be the oldest among them.

Based on the *sūtras*, there gradually emerged the vast literature of the *śāstras*, which combined scientific and political treatises as well as jurisprudential writing - the *Dharmaśāstras*—and which was distinguished by the wealth and variety of material essential for the reconstruction of many aspects of ancient Indian state and society. The *śāstras* have been regularly published, translated and analysed. Nevertheless, their dating still remains very tentative. This often hampers the identification of a text with a specific period and diminishes the value of the *śāstras* as a historical source. The oldest of them (*Gautama*, *Āpastamba*) are sometimes dated from the pre-Mauryan period, and the later ones—from the middle of the first millennium A.D.[107] According to P.V. Kane, some of the *Dharmaśāstras* appeared as early as the 6th-3rd centuries B.C., while in the 2nd century B.C., the texts were regarded as the highest authority on man's moral code.[109]

Certain difficulties are raised by a special characteristic of this type of literature. Closely associated with traditions of Brāhmaṇical schools, it often shows clear signs of the influence of Brāhmaṇical ideology, Brāhmaṇical norms and institutions.

The *Dharmaśāstras* were created by individual schools possibly of only local importance, but a modern scholar has to rely on their evidence when analysing the whole of India.

Students of ancient India often turn to the *Mānavaharmaśāstra* or *Manusmṛti*, *Yājñavalkyasmṛti* and *Nāradasmṛti*. It is customary to refer to the former collection as the *Laws of Manu*, although this definition does not render exactly the contents of the

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text and the meaning of the Sanskrit title. G. Bühler dated the source from the 2nd century B.C.—the 2nd century A.D.[110], and this view is now accepted by most of the scholars?.[111]

The *Yājñavalkyasmṛti* and *Nāradasmṛti*, by their nature, style and content, are closer to collections of laws proper than the *Laws of Manu*. They present a more systematic description of a number of aspects of criminal and civil legislation (but not in the modern sense of the word), court practices and organs of the judiciary, and their evidence may be used as comparative material in considering the system of state administration under the Mauryas and Śuṅgas, and the general principles of state policy elaborated in detail in Kauṭilya's treatise.

The *Purāṇas* are another valuable source, particularly when one compares their data with those of epigraphy, numismatics and the literature of the *śāstras*. The works of F. Pargiter, who did extensive research into the historical records of the *Purāṇas*, are very important. In addition to purely religious material,[112] they contain much legendary evidence, which is important for studying the mythology of the ancient Indians and the scope of their ideas. At the same time they include information on social relations and political organisation.[113] The *Purāṇas* are often the only source for the reconstruction of the political history and chronology of a number of specific periods of ancient India, in particular of the period of Magadha ascendancy.[114] They provide dynastic lists and information on the duration of kings' reigns, including the Mauryan kings.[115] True, quite frequently these lists do not tally with one another. P.H.L. Eggermont revealed two chronological systems in the *Purāṇas*, short and extended, the former, which is the earlier, deserving greater credibility.

When using Purāṇic evidence, one should bear in mind that although the core of the legends, in all probability, dates back to a very ancient period, it had taken the *Purāṇas* centuries to shape into a single integrated narration and that they were subjected to editing by representatives of different schools. Therefore one may come across in the *Purāṇas* accounts related to the first millennium B.C.[116] and to the early second millennium A.D.[117]

For a very long time, historians of ancient India have generally proceeded from the works of Brāhmaṇical literature alone and almost completely ignored Buddhist and Jaina texts. This is due to the general traditional approach to Indian culture, which was

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viewed from the standpoint of Brāhmaṇical culture. The view of Buddhism and Buddhist culture as a secondary factor dominated European Indology even in the late 19th century.

The prevalence of such views was also due to a limited knowledge of the original written documents of Buddhism and Jainism. The discovery of Buddhist texts in Pāli, and then of the so-called northern Buddist manuscripts written in Sanskrit, forced the scholars to reconsider their attitude to the role of Buddhism and Buddhist culture in the history of ancient India and of the whole East.

It is very important that Buddhist literature is directly linked with the dated period of Indian history and that many historical events of early Buddhism are often identified with actual facts of political life. The evidence of early Buddhist and early Jaina literature is very important[118] for the 6th-4th centuries B.C., a period not served by epigraphy. Buddhist and Jaina sources acquire particular significance for the study of the Mauryan period proper, as they contain data (poorly elucidated in the inscriptions) on the social, economic and political structure of society and on religious systems.

Unfortunately, the early Buddhist texts are not sufficiently made use of by students of the Mauryan period, since even now they are characterised as purely religious documents. The works of R. Fick, T.W. Rhys Davids, B.Ch. Law defend their value as historical sources,[119] but such an approach is not typical of the general trend.

The authors of the early Buddhist writings were naturally interested exclusively in the life and teaching of the Buddha. However, in narrating the life-story of the Buddha and his closest disciples, the authors of the Buddhist *sūtras* also depict the prevailing situation and describe the everyday life of various strata of society of that time.[120] These offer certain similarities with early Jaina writings which likewise deal with Mahāvīra and his teaching.[121] In these works much attention is paid to the states and people of North-East India, where *according to tradition* the Buddha and Mahāvīra preached. The texts mention mainly the kings who patronised Buddhism and Jainism, and the events which were somehow associated with the activities of their founders.

Some Buddhist texts are mentioned in the Aśokan edicts, and modern researchers have succeeded in identifying these texts

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with the relevant parts of the Pāli Buddhist canon.

The Bairat-Bhabru edict lists the titles of the following texts which, according to the inscription, were "said by the Buddha to counteract false doctrines".

1. 'Vinayasamukas'—is believed to be a part of the *Aṅguttara-Nikāya* (I.98—100)[122] or of the *Mahāvagga* (I.6.17—26);[123]

2. 'Aliyavasāni'—a part of *Dīgha-Nikāya* (III.269-291);

3. Anāgatabhayāni—a part of the *Aṅguttara-Nikāya* (III.100-110);

4. Munigāthā—usually compared with the *Suttanipāta* (I.12; V.207-221);

5. 'Moneyasutta'—close parallels of it are found in the *Dīgha-Nikāya* (III.220) and the *Aṅguttara-Nikāya* (I.273);

6. 'Upatisapasina'—a part of the *Suttanipāta* (IV.16; V.955-975);

7. Lāghulovāda—a part of the *Majjhima-Nikāya* (I.414-420).[124]

All this gives us ample justification to believe that in the 3rd century B.C., there existed Buddhist canonical texts which were possibly the core of the code recorded in Ceylon in the Pāli language in the 1st century B.C. E. Frauwallner dates the compilation of the Vinaya texts from the first half of the 4th century B.C.,[125] whereas G. Pande feels that at that time the greater part of the collections—the *Nikāyas*[126]—had been written, while separate parts, specific *sūtras*, could be passed by word of mouth long before the Aśokan age. Judging by the titles of the writings, their language was not Pāli, but the Prākṛt of Magadha, which in S. Lévi's definition was a "pre-canonical language."[127]

Not all Buddhist writings are of course equal in value as sources of the history and culture of Mauryan India. In this sense, the *Mahāvagga* and *Cūḷavagga*, parts of the *Vinayapiṭaka*, are the most important. Along with the narrations about the Buddha, they describe the life of the *saṅgha* and its relations with society.[128] They also provide information on the position of slaves, land farming, development of trades, etc. The wealth of historical material in the *Mahāvagga* and *Cūḷavagga* has led some historians to believe that the texts were based on ancient chronicles.

The fact that the canonical writings contain sections dating from different times seems very important. Quite often it is

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possible to distinguish older parts from later interpolations.[129]

The Pāli canon includes the *Jātakas*, an extremely wide-ranging and interesting source. Students of the history and culture of India of the second half of the first millennium B.C. find here material concerning various social groups (in particular, slaves),[130] the political organisation, state of crafts and trade and popular customs.

If some earlier parts of the *Jātakas* (*gāthās* and some narrative fragments) date back to the 3rd-1st centuries B.C.,[131] as is probable, the major part of the narrative text is undoubtedly related to the first century A.D.[132] However, as the formation of the collections took a very long time, it is admissible to use some of the evidence in studying India of the second half of the first millennium B.C., especially as comparative material.

Buddhist chroniclers had long since been drawn to the personality of Aśoka. A cycle of legends about this king—the *Aśokāvadāna*—enjoyed popularity in India, Nepal, Tibet and other countries. The legends were included in the *Divyāvadāna*[133] (chs 26-29) but they can also be regarded as independent writings. Research by scholars and, above all, by J. Przyluski, has shown that the "Aśokan cycle"[134] was based on ancient chronicles which began to be compiled during his lifetime, apparently in Magadha itself. According to P.H.L. Eggermont, the core of the cycle was a description of events taking place in the reign of the Mauryan king, his pilgrimage to the sacred places of Buddhism and his relations with the *saṅgha*.[135]

In the course of time, the "life-story of Aśoka", spreading from Magadha to other centres of Buddhist and Brahmaṇical culture, underwent considerable changes, accumulated new accretions and also various legends derived from Indian folklore.

In the middle of the 2nd century B.C. the "Aśokan cycle" in Pāli (*Aśoka sutta*) reached Kauśāmbī, a major centre of Buddhist culture. Then the Pāli version reached Mathura, the centre of Brāhmaṇical culture, and was rewritten in Sanskrit. Thus the *Aśoka-sutta* turned into the *Aśokāvadāna*. The Pāli text brought to Ceylon provided the basis for a number of legends of the southern "Aśokan cycle", and the *Aśokāvadāna* in the 1st century made its way from Mathura to North-West India and started the northern "Aśokan cycle." That is how Eggermont presents the history of its emergence. S. Chatterjee dates the cycle from 150-200 A.D.

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and not from the 2nd-1st centuries B.C., as J. Przyluski does.[136] However, some sculptures on Sanchi bas-reliefs clearly show that parts of the legends were widespread as early as the 2nd century B.C.

Avadānas about Aśoka, which survived also in Chinese and Tibetan translations, are known as tales about the gift of land, about Kuṇāla, Vitāśoka and Aśoka, The first *avadāna* contains interesting information about Bindusāra, Aśoka's expedition to Taxila to suppress a rebellion, and about the king's conversion to Buddhism. Some authors saw in it a reference to an eclipse of the sun and based their chronological schemes[137] on this assumption. The legend about Vitāśoka contains data on Aśoka's relations with other religions, legends about Kuṇāla[138] and about the offering of the *āmalaka* fruit[139] in short, important evidence regarding the last regnal years of Aśoka, his policy on religion, etc.

Many parts of the "cycle" were used by Aśvaghoṣa in compiling his *Sūtrālamkāra*,[140] and also by later writers, for example, Kṣemendra (11th century) in his poem *Avadāna-kalpalatā*, Hemacandra (a 12th-century Jaina author) in his *Pariśiṣṭaparvan*, the 17th-century Tibetan historian Tāranātha in his *History of Buddhism in India*. Some of the legends were incorporated in later collections in Nepal.[141] The genuine historical basis of a number of *Avadānas* about Aśoka makes the evidence contained in this cycle significant for studying the Mauryan period. The evidence corresponds with epigraphic data.[142]

Special attention should be paid to the comparison of the data of various traditions—Buddhist and Jaina, North Buddhist and Jaina, North Buddhist and Ceylonese. Such comparisons enable scholars to reveal both the common features in the traditions and the discrepancies due either to different interpretation of events and facts or to varying availability of sources.

A careful analysis of legendary evidence and its comparison with other sources show that sometimes even later collections and writings contain important information dating back to ancient sources. It is from this point of view that one should approach the *Aśokāvadānamālā*, a collection of various writings, including the *Avadānas* from the "Aśokan cycle."[143] Although this compilation dates to a later time (not earlier than the 11th century), its editor also used older texts and in a number of cases reflected

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reliable and trustworthy historical tradition.

The cycle of tales about Candragupta was also formed very early. Most of the legends about him survived in writings of the Gupta and post-Gupta periods, but the presence of versions, similar to and independent of one another and known from Buddhist and Jaina writings as well as from other literary texts, enables scholars to assume the existence of a special cycle about the Nandas, Candragupta and Cāṇakya (*Cāṇakya-Candragupta-kathā*).[144] One of the most ancient versions has survived from Pāli chronicles of Ceylon and the commentaries on them. They mention the rule of the last Nandas and Candragupta's struggle for power, describe the life of Cāṇakya, his clash with a Nanda king, etc. Another version is presented by Hemacandra in his *Pariśiṣṭaparvan*. He also cites a biography of Cāṇakya, tells of Cāṇakya's brief stay at the Nanda court, his quarrel with the king, who had insulted him, and of his vow to revenge; finally, of his departure from Pāṭaliputra, his meeting with the young Candragupta and their joint fight against the Nandas.

Both the Buddhist and Jaina versions of *Cāṇakya-Candragupta-kathā* apparently dated back to a Prākṛt version, which originally took shape in Magadha, where the "Aśokan cycle" also emerged. The 11th-century poets Somadeva and Kṣemendra, creating the figures of Candragupta and Cāṇakya, were guided by a Prākṛt writing of Guṇāḍhya (*Bṛhatkathā*). It is conceivable that the playwright Viśākhadatta (7th century A.D.) made use of one of the versions of *Cāṇakya-Candragupta-kathā* when writing his play *Mudrārākṣasa*. It is possible that it was the remote ancient tales that were known to some classical writers, to Diodorus, Curtius, Plutarch and Trogus, in particular.

The establishment of the authenticity of each record of the *Avadānas* about Aśoka and Candragupta, and the selection of facts and actual historical events from obviously legendary evidence require not only a careful analysis of the evidence and its comparison with all documentary matter that has survived, but also a study of the political situation in which a specific event took place or might have taken place.

Mauryan history was reflected also in the Pāli chronicles of Ceylon—*Dīpavaṃsa*[145] and *Mahāvaṃsa*.[146] The authors, who narrated mainly the history of Buddhism in Ceylon, were particularly interested in the personality of Aśoka, under whose reign

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Buddhism had first come to the Island.[147] According to L.Perera, these chronicles—written by Buddhist monks alone—have survived because they were safely preserved in the libraries of Buddhist *vihāras*.[148] The text of *Dīpavaṃsa*, as we know it, is dated approximately from the late 4th-early 5th centuries A.D. The upper time limit of the chronicle's compilation can be established particularly exactly: the monk Buddhaghoṣa, who had arrived from Magadha, stayed in Ceylon in the 5th century; he got acquainted with this text, mentioned it in his writings and quoted from it.[149] The chronicle ends with a statement of events which took place under the reign of king Mahāsena (4th century). An analysis showed that it was based on earlier Sinhalese texts.[150] W. Geiger believed that in writing his introduction to the *Samantapāsādikā* a commentary on the *Vinaya-Piṭaka*—Buddhaghoṣa was drawing on the *Dīpavaṃsa*, but it would be more correct to assume that both sources had used the ancient Sinhalese chronicle.[151]

Scholars are not unanimous in locating the sources of the *Dīpavaṃsa*. Some tend to tie it up with the tradition of the Mahāvihāra monastery and think that it had the same source as the *Mahāvaṃsa*. Others regard the *Dīpavaṃsa* as a quite independent work probably unrelated to the Mahāvihāra and therefore, to the *Mahāvaṃsa*.

Research has proved that the *Dīpavaṃsa* was not written by one author; its different parts were composed at different times and some of them are very old. According to G. Mendis, the *Dīpavaṃsa*, which tells the story of the emergence of Buddhism in Ceylon, had existed as far back as the 1st century, when the *Vinayattha-kathā* was recorded, but it assumed its final shape only in the 4th century.[152]

A different view is held by P.H.L. Eggermont. He thinks that the southern Ceylonese tradition about Aśoka, which also served as a source for the *Dīpavaṃsa*, took shape in Ceylon approximately in the 2nd century B.C. The Dutch scholar outlines routes through which it reached the island—from Kauśāmbī via Ujjayinī and Bharukachha. In Ceylon, this Pāli chronicle provided the basis for legends about Aśoka, which became part of both the *Dīpavaṃsa* and the *Mahāvaṃsa*.

The importance of the former for the reconstruction of the chronology of the Mauryan period is very great. Eggermont has proved that the *Dīpavaṃsa* reflected various traditions, existing

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at the same time but following different chronological schemes. This accounts for some contradictions within the text and between it and other writings.

The *Mahāvamsa*, also based on many local documents, was compiled somewhat later. The text itself speaks (1, 2) of the existence of an ancient narrative. According to the commentaries, the author of the *Mahāvaṃsa* used the ancient Sinhalese chronicle *Siṃhala-aṭṭhakathā*, related to the tradition of the Buddhist monastery Mahāvihāra.[153] It has been justly pointed out that its author drew on the historical data from the "books of merits"—*puñña-poṭṭhaka* (XXXII.25), which were found in royal families and rich households.[154] It is in such "royal diaries" that very old evidence could survive, especially of the activities of rulers aimed at the consolidation of Buddhism.

The authorship of the *Mahāvaṃsa* is attributed to the monk *Mahānāma*. The earliest mention of him as the author of this chronicle is made in the *Mahāvaṃsa-ṭīkā*,[155] a commentary on the *Mahāvaṃsa*. The original core of the chronicle contained a number of tales and legends, probably secular, and was then supplemented by Buddhist tales close to the *Jātakas* in form but different in subject. They originated from facts of Ceylonese and Indian history. The *Mahāvaṃsa-ṭīka* lists many ancient Sinhalese sources on which the author of the *Mahāvaṃsa*[156] might have drawn.

As early as the 3rd-2nd centuries B.C., Ceylon became an important centre of Buddhist culture. According to tradition, in 80 B.C. under king Vaṭṭagāmaṇi, there was recorded in the Island a Pāli canon whose parts had been known there much earlier. It would be logical to presume that the Buddhist tradition born after the emergence of Buddism in Ceylon was not interrupted. This tradition, which conditioned the spread of Buddhism in the Island with Aśoka and his son Mahinda (Mahendra), was reflected in numerous sources (including the *Dīpavaṃsa* and *Mahāvaṃsa*). Ceylonese Buddhist writings understandably gave much attention to Aśoka, the events of the third Council in Pāṭaliputra and to the sending out of Buddhist missions.[157]

Ever since the studies of the chronicles began, scholars have continued to ponder over their historical value. W. Geiger, the publisher and translator of the *Mahāvaṃsa*, held, in opposition

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to a number of scholars (R. Franke, V. Smith[159] and others), that as a historical account the tools were important, and pointed out the similarity between many of their data and the data of other sources. The discovery of the Sanchi inscriptions was an epigraphic confirmation that some of the information in the chronicles was authentic.[160]

While acknowledging the importance of the Ceylonese chronicles for the study of Mauryan history,[161] it should, however, be borne in mind that they were compiled over a very long period by many Buddhist monks who sometimes distorted the text or introduced their own "corrections."[162] This is directly indicated by the peculiarities of the language, grammar and style, the abundance of repetitions, lack of a uniform plan, etc.

The so-called Extended, or Cambodian *Mahāvaṃsa* is particularly noteworthy.[164] Its text appeared much later than the *Mahāvamsa*, but it included information from the *Aṭṭhakathā-Mahāvamsa*, which was not incorporated in Mahānāma's *Mahāvaṃsa*; this fact makes the text very interesting in some respects. Unfortunately, as has been justly noted by L. Perera, this text has not been duly used by researchers.[165]

In comparison with the basic text, the extended version contains some new data on the Nanda and Mauryan periods: on the region of the Nandas, the rise of Chāṇakya, the origin of the Mauryas, the first regnal years of Candragupta, Aśoka's struggle for power, his stay at Ujjayinī, his conversion to Buddhism, etc. Some of its information is very close to the data of the *Mahāvaṃsa-ṭīkā* or is even identical with them, and apparently both works date back to common older sources.

According to G. Malalasekera who published the *Mahāvamsa-ṭīkā*, it was written in the 8th-9th centuries A.D.,[166] but the text was based on earlier writings, including the versions of local chronicles preserved in Ceylonese monasteries. It is characteristic, for example, that in telling the story of the accession and reign of Candragupta, the author of the notes, in his own words, turned to the *Uttaravihāra-aṭṭhakathā*, and in describing later events, to the Sinhalese *Aṭṭhakathā*, which has not survived. The commentaries also contain such evidence regarding the Mauryan period as is lacking in other Ceylonese writings and should be taken into account since it links up with the known data of the non-Buddhist tradition.

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Among other late Pāli chronicles of Ceylon, we should mention the *Mahābodhivaṃsa*, which deals with the history of the "Bodhi Tree" in the Island and contains some data regarding the rule of the Nandas and the Mauryas (the author of the chronicle based his work on an earlier Sinhalese writing),[167] as well as the *Thūpavaṃsa*,[168] compiled in the 13th century A.D.,[169] which tells the story of the "Buddha's tooth". Material on Aśoka, his relations with the Buddhist community in India and with Ceylonese kings can be found in this work.

Some information on Mauryan India (particularly on the history of the Buddhist council under Aśoka) is available in the Pāli *Sāsanavaṃsa*, which narrates the history of Buddhism.[170] It was compiled in 1861 by a Burmese monk, who had used ancient chronicles. Among Ceylonese writings in Sinhalese mention should be made of the *Nikāya-saṅgraha* and the *Pūjāvaliya* in spite of their very late dates.

The introduction written by Bhuddhaghoṣa for the *Samantapāsādikā* is probably connected with an ancient Ceylonese tradition. Its copious data are similar to those of the *Mahāvamsa*, and this similarity led scholars to conclude that both the works had originated from a common source. Buddhaghoṣa gives details of the events preceding the Third Buddhist Council and of its results.[173] It has preserved information about Aśoka's religious policy, which is absent in other written sources but which is in agreement with his inscriptions.

Among Buddhist non-canonical writings in Sanskrit mention should be made of the Mahāyāna work *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa*, which is a kind of chronicle of the Indian dynasties. The text covers a wide historical period from the 7th century B.C. to the 8th century A.D. and contains important facts of political history including those of the Nanda and Mauryan periods.

A student of the Mauryan period may find much of interest in grammatical treatises and works of lexicographers of ancient India. The particular significance of these works is that, unlike the Brāhmaṇical literature of the *sūtras* and *śāstras*, they generally present material taken directly from life. Among the grammatical treatises the central place is undoubtedly occupied by the work of the great Pāṇini—*Aṣṭadhyāyī* (*Octateuch*), dealing with the elaboration of Sanskrit grammar. Scholars are not unanimous in dating this work, but a date between 500 and 400 B.C. seems to be

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the most reasonable.[174] We do not know of any dated documents of that time, and therefore Pāṇini's information about some aspects of social life in the middle of the first millennium B.C., on which he drew to illustrate rules of grammar, are particularly valuable. The *Aṣṭādhyāyī* reflects facts and phenomena of the first stages in the development of the ancient Indian states. It provides indirect data on the forms of a state's authority, the *varṇa* and caste organisation, farming, commerce, various groups of free and dependent population. In using these data it is necessary to take into consideration the commentaries and, collectively, the whole tradition connected with the grammatical school of Pāṇini.[175] According to legend Pāṇini came from North-West India.[176] This, however, does not mean that his material is related only to that part of the country. The author of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* knew also about the people of East and Central India.

The evidence of some mediaeval Indian and foreign works which drew on ancient texts and often conveyed a very early tradition are also of some importance to a student of early Indian history. Mention could be made of the *Rājatarangiṇī*, the 12th-century Kashmir chronicle, the works, cited about, of the poets Kṣemendra and Somadeva (the latter's most popular work is the *Kathāsaritsāgara*), Hemachandra's work *Pariśiṣṭaparvan*, where one may come across interesting information on the rule of Chandragupta and other Mauryan kings, their religious policy, etc.

Substantial evidence on the history of the Mauryan period is placed at the disposal of scholars also by archaeology. The data provided by excavations of multi-layered settlements and towns, which played an important role in the historical development of ancient India,[177] supplement considerably the evidence of literary and epigraphic sources. Archaeological excavation at Hastināpura, a site known from the epics, has uncovered layers from the middle of the second millennium B.C. up to the Middle Ages,[178] and a study of the main stages of the history of the settlement makes it possible to learn about its condition in the period of the formation of large states in the Ganges Valley in the 6th-3rd centuries. B.C.

The excavations, which for many years were headed by J. Marshal, at Taxila, an important centre in the north-western part of the country (now Pakistan),[179] are of great scientific importance. It has become possible to reconstruct the history of the

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city over many centuries, to answer the hitherto unknown questions about its political status and its role during some periods, including the Mauryan period, to determine its economic condition, scope of commercial operations and its external relations.

Mention should also be made of the excavations at Rupar (not far from Ambala), where layers from Harappa age up to the Middle Ages were unearthed.[180] The so-called third period in the city's history covers the span between 600 and 200 B.C., as is borne out by the finds of coins, Northern Black Polished pottery and iron. An ivory seal with Brāhmī letters has also been found there. Archaeological work at Ujjayinī[181] has made it possible to discover the peculiarities of the formation of the city, the specifics of handicraft industries, etc.

Excavations at Kauśāmbī, Rājagṛha and Pāṭaliputra have also proved to be important for a reconstruction of the picture of the historical development of North-West India in the second half of the first millennium B.C.

The material found in Kauśāmbī, with G.R. Sharma in charge of the excavations, has supplemented our knowledge of early Buddhist history (the discovery of the Buddhist Ghoṣitārāma monastery) and the system of town building in the Mauryan Śuṅga age.[182]

The excavations at Rājagṛha, the ancient capital of Magadha, have uncovered layers related to the middle of the first millennium B.C., and the work done by A.S. Altekar[183] at Kumrahar (Patna) has unearthed a building with columns, which is linked with the "one hundred-column hall" of Aśoka reported by Hsüan Tsang.

Apart from epigraphy, numismatics is a reliable source which scholars constantly turn to. Indeed, a large number of coins can be dated fairly correctly or they can be related to a definite historical period.[184] Besides, often numismatic data help to date archaeological finds correctly.

Numismatic data are particularly valuable for studying Mauryan history, since it was in the Mauryan period that the use of coins became widespread, although their first appearance in India had taken place in the preceding periods.

Unfortunately, it has not been possible so far to establish a convincing connection between certain types of coins and the specific stages in the development of the Mauryan state. In recent years a general growth of numismatic research has been

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undertaken in India, and attention is being increasingly focussed on the problems of the economic development of that country in ancient times.[185]

The success so far achieved by history and archaeology gives rise to the hope that soon new sources will be found, and among them those that could be dated to the Mauryan period. This will make it possible to read those pages of Mauryan India's history, which have so far remained obscured.

Notes and References

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2. The Chinese pilgrims Fa-hien and Hşüan Tsang, who travelled in India in the 4th-5th and 7th centuries, respectively, adduce in their diaries the reading of the edicts, which was based only on oral information of local inhabitants.
3. Nandalal Chatterji, 'Firoz Tughluq and Aśokan Pillars', *JIH*, vol. 34, No. 1, 1956, pp. 33-37.
4. European travellers who visited India in the 17th century believed that the pillars bearing inscriptions were memorial columns erected by Alexander the Great to commemorate his victories over the Indian king Porus. According to T. Coryat (1615-1616), even the famous Gupta inscription on the iron pillar in Delhi was written in Greek. (See W. Foster, *Early Travels in India 1583-1619*, Oxford, 1921, p. 248; S.N. Mukherjee, *Sir William Jones...* p. 8).
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7. D. Schlumberger, *Une nouvelle inscription grecque d'Aśoka*, Paris, 1964; E. Benveniste, 'Edicts d'Aśoka en traduction grecque', *JA* 1964, t. 252, pp. 137-157; J. Harmatta, 'Zu den griechischen Inschriften des Aśoka' *Acta Antique* 1966, t. XIV, f. 1-2, pp. 77-85; K.R. Norman, 'Notes on the Greek Version of Aśoka's Twelfth and Thirteenth Rock Edicts,' *JRAS*, 1972, pp. 111-118.
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9. A. Ghosh, 'The Pillars of Aśoka—Their Purpose', *EW*, vol. 17, Nos. 3-4, 1967, pp. 273-275.
10. Most scholars felt that the Aramaic inscription with the name Priyadarsī found in Taxila in 1915, dates back to the period of Aśoka's stay in Taxila as a reigning prince, before he became king. (J. Marshall, *Taxila*, vol. I Cambridge, 1951; G.M. Bongard-Levin, 'Taksilskaya nadpis' *Asoki* [The Taxila Inscription of Aśoka'], *Sovetskoye Vostokovedeniye* [*Soviet Oriental Studies*], No. I, 1956 pp. 126-128; R. Choudhary, 'Aśoka and the Taxila Inscription, *ABORI*, vol. 39, 1958, pp. 127-132 (the author supports the conclusions of G. M. Bongard-Levin). See also H. Humbach, *Die aramaische Inschrift von Taxila*, Mainz, 1969, (Akademie des Wissenschaften und der Literature).
11. *CII*, I, p. XLIV. In the opinion of H. Seth, the Minor Rock Edicts of Aśoka are the latest of Aśoka's inscriptions (H. C. Seth, 'Chronology of Aśokan Inscription', *JIH*. vol. 17, 1938, pp. 279-292).
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13. Ch.S. Upasaka, *The History and Palaeography of Mauryan Brāhmī Script*, Nalanda, 1960.
14. One figurine is in the National Museum (Delhi). We had an opportunity of seeing the other one in the personal collection of Acharya Bhavan Dev (India).
15. Researchers still turn to the work of E. Schwanbeck, who collected all fragements attributed to Megasthenes (E.A. Schwanbeck, *Megasthenes' Indica*, Bonnae, 1846; the book was reprinted in 1966). See also J. W. McCrindle, *Ancient India as Described by Megasthenes and Arrian*,

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Calcutta, 1926, B.C.J. Timmer, *Megasthenes en de Indische Maatschappij*, Amsterdam, 1930; R.C. Majumdar, *Classical Accounts of India*, Calcutta, 1961.

16. Clemens Alexandrinus wrote that Megasthenes lived at the time of Seleucus Nicator (See E.A. Schwanbeck, *Megasthenes' Indica*, p. 137, fragment 342).
17. Arrian reports in his *Anabasis* (V.6.2) that Megasthenes frequently called on (came personally to) Sandracottos (Candragupta), king of the Indians. On the basis of this, some scholars believed that Megasthenes visited India on more than one occasion (Chr. Lassen, *Indische Altertumskunde*, Bd I, p. 668; *CHI*, p. 398). The text, however, referred probably to the ambassador's visits to the Indian king in Pataliputra (See the translation by McCrindle : "During his embassy he had frequent interviews with him" J.W. McCrindle, *The Invasion of India by Alexander the Great*, Westminster, 1983, p. 88). B.A. Saletore's point of view, according to which Megasthenes, while still at the court of the satrap of Arachosia, undertook a trip to India between 320 and 316 B.C., and then again arrived at Pāṭaliputra in late 303—early 302 B.C., can hardly be considered correct (B.A. Saletore, *India's Diplomatic Relations with the West*, Bombay, 1948, pp. 116-118).
18. Strabo (II.I.9) considered Megasthenes a liar although he made wide use of the Seleucid ambassador's records. On the other hand, Arrian, Pliny and Solinus regarded Megasthenes' information as trustworthy. Arrian called Megasthenes and Eratosthenes trusted persons (*Anab.* V. 5).
19. The works of Athenaeus, Clemens Alexandrinus and others contain references to the second, third and fourth books of Megasthenes' *Indika.*
20. For more details, see R.C. Majumdar, 'The Indica of Megasthenes' *JAOS*, vol. 78, No. 4, 1958 pp. 273-276.
21. R. C. Majumdar was opposed by K. Sethna, who argued that much of the evidence provided by Megasthenes was correct (K.D. Sethna, 'Rejoinder to R.C. Majumdar,' *JAOS*, vol. 80, No. 3, 1960, pp. 243-248. See also J.D. Derrett, 'Two Notes on Megasthenes' Indika', *JAOS*, vol. 88, No. 4, 1968, pp. 776-781; T.S. Brown, 'The Reliability of Megasthenes', *American Journal of Philology*, vol. 76, 1955, pp. 18-33).
22. R. Dikshitar rejected such a presumption (R. Dikshitar, *The Mauryan Polity*, Madras, 1932 References are to this edition).
23. For more details see G.M. Bongard-Levin, 'Drevneindiy-skiye rāja-sabhā i parisad v "Indike" Megasfena' [The Ancient Indian Rāja-Sabhā and Parisad in Megasthenes' Indika'], *Problemi Vostokovedeniya*, [*Problems of Oriental Studies*], No. 2, 1959, pp. 158-161.
24. Strabo (XV.I. 66) reported that Indian laws had not been recorded. Probably he had in mind the *Dharmasūtras*, the ancient "laws" referred by local tradition to *Smṛti*, that is to "what is remembered". It is not ruled out that Megasthenes was familiar with some parts of late Vedic and epic literature, widely current in the Mauryan period. It is admissible to presume that the assertion of Aelian (Claudius Aelianus) according to which the Indians had translated Homer's poems into their own language and sung them goes back to Megasthenes (*A Collection of Miscellaneous*

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History, XII. 48). A similar evidence is found in Dion (1st century A.D.), who was surnamed Chrysostom ("Golden-mouthed") (LIıI. 554).

25. See, for example S.K. Dikshit, 'Was the Bhagavad-Gītā Known to Megasthenes,' *ABORI*, vol. 31, 1950, pp. 298-315; A. Dahliquist, *Megasthenes and Indian Religions : A Study in Motives and Types*, Stockholm, 1962.
26. According to T. Brown, we should regard with doubt Megasthenes' material which he gleaned from written sources; only what he himself saw at the court of Candragupta deserves credit (T. Brown, 'A Megasthenes Fragment on Alexander and Mandanis,' *JAOS*, vol. 80, No. 2, 1960, pp. 133-135).
27. *Anab*, V. 45.
28. O. Stein, *Megasthenes and Kauṭilya*, Wien, 1921.
29. J. Jolly, 'Introduction', *The Arthaśāstra of Kautilya*, a new edition, J. Jolly and R. Schmidt, vol. I, Text, Lahore, 1923.
30. A.B. Keith, *A History of Sanskrit Literature*, London, 1932.
31. R. Dikshitar, *The Mauryan Polity*.
32. Kangle, III, pp. 69-70.
33. J. Jolly, 'Introduction'... *Loc. cit.*, pp. 34-35.
34. *ibid.*, p. 35; Kangle, III, p. 73.
35. R. Dikshitar, *The Mauryan Polity*, p. 373.
36. *ibid.*, p. 32.
37. B. Breloer, *Kauṭalīya Studien*, Bd I : *Das Grundeigentum in Indian*, Bonn, 1927, Bd II, *Altindisches Privaterecht bei Megasthenes und Kauṭalīya*, Bonn, 1928, Bd. III, *Finanzverwaltung und Wirtschaftsführung*, Leipzig, 1934.
38. See B. Breloer 'Megasthenes über die indische Staatsverwaltung', *ZDMG*, Neue Folge, Bd 14 (89), 1935 p. 80.
39. For more details, see G.M. Bongard-Levin, 'Drevneindiiskiye rāja-sabhā... [The Ancient Indian Rāja-sabhā...], *Loc. cit.*
40. For more details, see G. M. Bongard-Levin, "*Indika*" *Megasfena i nadpisi Ashoki* [*Megasthenes' Indika*" *and Aśoka's Inscriptions*], *Moscow*, 1960.
41. R. Dikshitar, *The Mauryan Polity*, p. 28.
42. J. Jolly, 'Introduction...', *Loc. cit.*, p. 41.
43. J.D. Derret, 'Two Notes...,' *Loc. cit.*, pp. 776-777. It is possible also to refer to a book by Puri (B. Puri, *India in Classical Greek Writings*, Ahmedabad, 1963). Megasthenes was also defended by T. Brown, 'The Reliability of Megasthenes,' *Loc. cit.*, pp. 18-33).
44. Interesting information on India survived in *A Collection of Miscellaneous History* and *On the Peculiarities of Animals* by Aelian (2nd cent.), *Geography* by Ptolemy (2nd cent.), *Periplus of the Erythrean Sea* (1st cent.). Some data definitely suggest that Trogus was familiar with the Indian tradition and writings including those which told of the reign of the Nandas and the Mauryas (For more details, see M. Bussagli, 'Indian Events in Trogus Pompeius,' *EW*, vol. 7. No. 3, 1956). W. Tarn believes that Trogus drew on the evidence of a person who lived in India at the time and had a good knowledge of the local tradition, in particular, the epics (W.W. Tarn, *The Greeks in Bactria and India*, Cambridge, 1938, pp. 97, 511-512).
45. Callisthenes was the author of several works, which survived only in

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fragments and in later texts. Callisthenes took part in a plot against Alexander and, inspite of his closeness to the king and kinship to Aristotle was executed. See S.I. Kovalev, 'Zagovor pazhei' ['The Pages' Plot'], *Vestnik drevnei istorii* [*Bulletin of Ancient History*], 1948, No. I.

46. Ye.E. Bertels, *Roman ob Aleksandre i ego glavniye versii na Vostoke* [*A Novel on Alexander and Its Main Versions in the East*], Moscow—Leningrad, 1948; Ye. A. Kostiukhin, *Aleksandr Makedonskii v literaturnoi i folkliornoi traditsii* [*Alexander the Great in the Literary and Folkloric Traditi ons*], Moscow, 1972.
47. Of some importance for a study of the events of the Indian campaign of Alexander are the data preserved in the *Shah-Nameh* by Firdausi, although that literary work was written in the 11th century A.D. (bibliography on it is given in the section dealing with Candragupta).
48. Basic questions about the authorship, dating and contents of the treatise are presented in detail in the new fundamental work by R.P. Kangle.
49. Scholars studying the treatise have long been arguing about how the author's name was pronounced—Kauṭilya or Kauṭalya. In recent years many seem to have accepted the view advanced by Gaṇapati Sastri, who considered it correct to call him Kauṭalya (See R. Thapar, *Aśoka and the Decline of the Mauryas*, Oxford, 1961, p. 218; D.D. Kosambi, 'The Text of Arthaśāstra', *JAOS*, vol. 78, No. 3, 1958, pp. 169-173; H. Berger, Kauṭalya ist alter als Kauṭilya', *Münchener Studien zur Sprachwissenschaft*, München, 1955). Indeed, some data (for example the commentary *Jayamaṅgalā*) point conclusively to a relation between the name Kauṭalya and the name of the Kuṭala gotra (See G.M. Bongard-Levin, 'K vyhodu v svet russkogo perevoda "Arthashastri" ['On the Publication of the Russian Translation of the "Arthaśāstra"] *Problemi Vostokovedeniya* [*Problems of Oriental Studies*], No. 3, 1960, p. 256). However, we use the traditional spelling Kauṭilya accepted in our historiography.
50. *Kauṭiliyam Arthaśāstram*, ed. by R. Shama Shastri, Mysore, 1909.
51. *Age of the Nandas and Mauryas*, ed. by K.A. Nilakanta Sastri, Banaras, 1952, p. 191.
52. *Kauṭalīyam Arthaśāstram* (The Arthaśastra of Kauṭalya), with the commentary of T. Ganapati Sastri, pts I-III, Trivandrum, 1924-1925.
53. J. Meyer, Das Altindische Buch von Welt and Staatsleben; Das Arthaśastra des Kauṭilya, Leipzig, 1926.
54. Sten Konow, *Kauṭalya Studies*, Oslo, 1945.
55. O. Stein, *Megasthenes und Kauṭilya*.
56. B. Breloer, *Kauṭalīya Studien*.
57. *A Comprehensive History of India*, Vol. II (The Mauryas and Satavahanas, 325 B.C.—A.D. 300), Calcutta, 1957.
58. R. Dikshitar, *The Mauryan Policy*.
59. M.S. Krishna Rao, *Studies in Kauṭilya*, Mysore, 1953.
60. For more details, see Shama Sastri's introduction to the publication and translation of the *Arthaśāstra*, and also V.I. Kalyanov, "*Arthaśāstra*"—*vazhneishiy pamiatnik indiiskoi kultury* [*The Arthaśāstra*" *As the Most Important Monument of Indian Culture*], in—"Arthaśastra ili Nauka politiki" ["The Arthaśastra or the Science of Politics"], ed. by V.J. Kalyanov Moscow-

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Leningrad, 1959; K.P. Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*, pp. 374-377. Nilakanta Sastri opposes the arguments of the advocates of a later dating and dates it to the Mauryan age (*Age of the Nandas and Mauryas*, pp. 191-201, pp. 367-373).

61. Kangle, III, p. 81.
62. H. Jacobi, 'Uber die Echtheit des Kauṭiliya' *SKPAW*, Bd. 38, 1912, pp. 832-849.
63. A.B. Keith, *A History of Sanskrit Literature*, Oxford, 1961.
64. *The Age of the Imperial Unity*, pp. 285-287.
65. A.M. Osipov, *Kratkii ocherk istorii Indii do X veka* [*An Outline of the History of India till the 10th Century*], Moscow, 1948; V.I. Kalyanov, "*Arthaśāstra*"... *loc. cit.*, by the same author: O vremeni sostavleniya "Arthaśāstra" ['Concerning the Time of the Writing of the Arthaśāstra'], *Mezhdunarodnii kongres vostokovedov* [*International Congress of Orientalists*], Moscow, 1954, pp. 23-39.
66. H. Scharfe, *Untersuchungen zur Staatsrechtslehre des Kauṭalya*, Wiesbaden, 1968. See also A.A. Vigasin, "Istochnikovedcheskiye problemy izucheniya "Arthaśāstra" [Problems of the Sources in Studying the "Arthaśāstra"], *Vestnik drevnei istorii* [*Bulletin of Ancient History*], No. 1, 1972, pp. 218-233.
67. See T. Trautmann, *Kauṭilya and the Arthaśāstra* (*A Statistical Investigation of the Authorship and Evolution of the Text*), Leiden, 1971.
68. O. Stein, 'Arthaśāstra and Śilpaśāstra', *AO*, vol. 7, pp. 473-487, vol. 8, pp. 69-90, 334-356; vol. 10, pp. 163-209, and also R.P. Kangle, III, pp. 84-85.
69. M. Winternitz, *Geschichte der indischen Litteratur*, Bd 3, Leipzig, 1920, p. 519.
70. S. Lévi, 'Alexander and Alexandria in Indian Literature', *IHQ* vol. 12, 1936, pp. 120-133, see also T. Trautmann, *Kauṭilya...*, p. 117.
71. This evidence was one of the main proofs advanced by the advocates of the later dating of the *Arthaśāstra*, but in the opinion of R. Thapar the text could refer to silk from another area, and the mention of China was a later interpolation (R. Thapar, *Aśoka...*, p. 219; see also: D.D. Kosambi, *Introduction...*, p. 202; T. Trautmann, *Kauṭilya...*, p. 177).
72. O. Stein, 'Surinks und Suruṅgā', *ZII*, Bd III, 1935, pp. 280-318; see also: R.P. Kangle, III, pp. 76-77. *Suruṅgā* ("mine", "underground tunnel") was linked by some scholars with the Greek Surinks, but F.B.J. Kuiper suggested also a non-Indo-Aryan etymology (*AO*, vol. 17, 1939, pp. 30-34). See also H. Scharfe, *Untersuchungen...*, p. 322.
73. T. Trautmann, *Kauṭilya...*, pp. 178-183.
74. *The Age of Imperial Unity*, pp. 285-287; for criticism of this point of view, see *Age of the Nandas and Mauryas*, pp. 192-193; R. Thapar, *Aśoka...*, p. 221. O. Stein has pointed out that Kauṭilya recommended the composition of royal edicts in Sanskrit, whereas Sanskrit inscriptions had not been found widely in North India before the Gupta period (O. Stein, 'Versuch einer Analyse des Śāsanādhikāra,' *ZII*, Bd 6, 1928). Inscriptions in Sanskrit of an earlier time are extremely rare.

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75. Even E. Sluszkiewicz pointed to the absence of archaisms in the language of the *Arth.* (See E. Sluszkiewicz, *Przyczynki do bactan nad Kautilya*, Lwow, 1929). His view was supported recently by Scharfe (H. Scharfe, *Untersuchungen...*, pp. 88-112).
76. O. Stein, *Megasthenes und Kauṭilya*, For an analysis of O. Stein's arguments, see R.P. Kangle's work (Kangle, III, pp. 66-67).
77. T. Burrow, 'Cāṇakya and Kauṭilya', *ABORI*, Vols. 47-49, 1968, pp. 13-17.
78. S.F. Oldenburg, 'O dokumente v feodalnoi Indii' ['On Documents in Feudal India'], *Soobshcheniye Gosudarstvennoi Akademii istorii materialnoi kultury* [*Communication of the State Academy of the History of Material Culture*''], Nos 9-10, 1932, p. 45.
79. *Age of the Nandas and Mauryas*, p. 190; G.M. Bongard-Levin, *K. vyhodu...*, p. 242; by the same author: 'Nekotoriye osobennosti gosudarstvennogo ustroistva imperii Mauriev (istochniki i problematika') ['Some Peculiarities of the State System of the Mauryan Empire (Sources and Problems)'],— *Istoriya i kultura drevnei Indii* [*History and Culture of Ancient India*], pp. 16-17; G.M. Bongard-Levin, G.F. Ilyin, *Ancient India*, p. 47; R. Thapar, *Aśoka...*, pp. 218-225.
80. R.S. Sharma, *Aspects of Political Ideas and Institutions in Ancient India*, Delhi, 1968. The reference in the text (II. 12) to coins without legends but with symbols apparently relates to punch-marked coins, which had begun to circulate rather early in the pre-Mauryan age.
81. T. Trautmann, *Kauṭilya...*, p. 173.
82. This point of view is still held by many contemporary scholars (for example, R. Thapar).
83. See Jolly's introduction to the publication of the text, p. 45; E. Johnston, 'Two Studies in the Arthaśāstra of Kauṭilya', *JRAS*, 1929, pp. 77-89 (especially p. 88).
84. T. Burrow, 'Cāṇakya...', *loc. cit.*, pp. 17-31.
85. P.V. Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra* (*Ancient and Mediaeval Religious and Civil Law*), vols. I-V, Poona, 1930-1962.
86. *ibid.*, vol. I, p. 93.
87. See F. Wilchelm, *Politische Polemiken im Staatslehrbuch des Kauṭalya*, Wiesbaden, 1960 (Münchener Indologische Studien, Bd II).
88. A Hillebrandt, *Altindisches Politik*, Jena, 1928.
89. V.S. Agrawala, *India as Known to Pāṇini*, Lucknow, 1935. Coincidences are traced both in terminology and in similar descriptions of various aspects of life. According to V. Agrawala, Pāṇini lived approximately at the same time as Kauṭilya; this is supported by the numismatic data contained in the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* (p. IX). Agrawala believes that the numismatic material provides evidence in favour of referring the *Arthaśāstra* to the Mauryan period.
90. E.H. Johnston, 'Two Studies...,' *loc. cit.*, pp. 77-89; J. Jolly, 'Arthaśāstra and Dharmaśāstra, *ZDMG*, Bd 67, 1913, pp. 49-96; J.D. Derrett, 'A Newly-Discovered Contact between Arthaśāstra and Dharmaśāstra; the Role of Bharucin', *ZDMG*, Bd 15, Hf 1, 1965, pp. 134-152.
91. R. Thapar, *Aśoka...*, p. 225. Accordnig to R.S. Sharma, the source had

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been completely formed in the 1st century B.C. (R.S. Sharma, *Aspects of Political Ideas*, p. 20).

92. T. Trautmann, *Kauṭilya...*, p. 186.
93. K.C. Ojha, 'On the Controversy about the Arthaśāstra', *IHQ*, vol. 28, 1952, pp. 265-272; R. Thapar, *Aśoka...*, pp. 219-220. R.P. Kangle is against the view advanced by Ojha that Viṣṇugupta was different from Kauṭilya and lived later than the latter (Kangle, III, p. 106). Radhakrishna Choudhary believes that by its style and form the *Arthaśāstra* may be dated from the beginning of our era, whereas its contents reflect an earlier period—not later than the 4th century B.C. (R. Choudhary, *A Short Study in Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra*, Patna, 1953, p. 69).
94. T. Trautmann, *Kauṭilya...*, p. 174.
95. U.N. Ghoshal, *A History of Indian Political Ideas*, Bombay, 1956, pp. 111-112.
96. T. Burrow, 'Cāṇakya...', *loc. cit.*, pp. 30-31.
97. R.S. Sharma, *Aspects of Political Ideas*, pp. 19, 179-200.
98. J.S. Negi, *Some Indological Studies*, vol. I, Allahabad, 1966, pp. 12-32.
99. For a critical comment on such approach, see also A. Warder, 'The Pāli Canon and its Commentaries as an Historical Record', in *Historians of India, Pakistan and Ceylon*, ed. by C.H. Philips, Oxford, 1961.
100. According to R.S. Kangle, the principles of both domestic and foreign policy reflected in the *Arthaśāstra* relate even to the pre-Mauryan period, when the śāstra emerged and was studied in detail (See Kangle, III, p. 267).
101. Many similarities are traced between the *Arthaśāstra* and the Aśokan inscriptions (R. Dikshitar, *The Mauryan Polity*, pp. 47-48).
102. *Age of the Nandas and Mauryas*, p. 190.
103. For example, R.K. Mookerji, *Chandragupta Maurya...*
104. For more details, see V.M. Apte, *Social and Religious Life in the Gṛihya-sūtras*, Bombay, 1959.
105. S.C. Banerjee, *Dharma-Sūtras: A Study in Their Origin and Development*, Calcutta, 1962.
106. See B.N. Puri, *India in the Time of Patañjali*, Bombay, 1968.
107. See R.S. Sharma, *Aspects of Political Ideas*, p. 15. Sharma is against Kane's view that *Gautama* is one of the most ancient *Dharmasūtras* (See P.V. Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra*, vol. I, pt 1, p. 13.)
108. *ibid.*, p. 8.
109. *ibid.*, vol. I, pt 1, p. 9.
110. *The Laws of Manu*, transl. by G. Bühler, Oxford, 1886, pp. CVI-CXVII.
111. See, for example, *The Age of Imperial Unity*, p. 256.
112. For more details, see R.C. Hazra, *Studies in the Purāṇic Records on Hindu Rites and Customs*, Calcutta, 1940.
113. For more details, see U.N. Ghoshal, *A History of Indian Political Ideas*, chs XVIII and XXIV.
114. See, for example, H.G. Shastri, The Puranic Chronology of the Mauryan Dynasty, *JOIB*, vol. IX, 1960, pp. 387-392.
115. H. Shastri believes that the most exact data on Mauryan chronology survived in the *Bhāgavata-Purāṇa* (H. Shastri, The Purānic Chronology of

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the Mauryan Dynasty, *loc. cit.* Some scholars give preference to the evidence of the *Vāyu-Purāṇa*.

116. See V. Smith, *The Early History of India*, 4th ed., Oxford, 1957, p. 24. Further references are to this edition.
117. For more detail, see R. Patil, *Cultural History from the Vāyu-Purāṇa*, Poona, 1946.
118. See, for example, H. Raychaudhuri, *Political History of Ancient India*, 6th ed. Calcutta, 1953; *The Age of Imperial Unity*; A.K. Warder, 'The Pāli Canon'...*loc. cit.* pp. 44-56.
119. See R. Fick, *Die sociale Gliederung*; T. Rhys Davids, *Buddhist India*, Calcutta, 1959; B. Ch. Law, *India as Described in Early Texts of Buddhism and Jainism*, London, 1941.
120. D.R. Chanana's work, based on research into Pāli writings, is a graphic proof of the importance of early Buddhist sources for studies of the social structure of ancient India including the Mauryan period (Dev Raj Chanana, *Rabstvo v drevnei Indii (po paliiskim i sanskritskim istochnikam)* [*Slavery in Ancient India (According to Pāli and Sanskrit Sources)*], Moscow, 1964. See also *CHI*, I, pp. 198-219.
121. J. Jain, *Life in Ancient India as Depicted in Jain Canons*, Bombay, 1947.
122. E. Lamotte, *Histoire du bouddhisme indien*, Louvain, 1958, p. 256.
123. V. Bhattacharya, *Buddhist Texts as Recommended by Aśoka*, Calcutta, 1948, p. XI.
124. The identification of the above-mentioned texts raised a controversy among Buddhologists. For more details of different interpretations, see L. de la Vallée-Poussin, *L'Inde*..., pp. 126-133.
125. E. Frauwallner, *The Earliest Vinaya and the Beginning of Buddhist Literature*, Rome, 1956, pp. IX, 135.
126. G.C. Pande, *Studies in the Origins of Buddhism*, Allahabad, 1957, p. 15.
127. S. Lévi, 'Observations sur une lange precanonique du bouddhisme, *JA*, 1912, pp. 495-514.
128. Since in its organisation the Buddhist *saṅgha* borrowed many features of the republican political system, the data of the *Mahāvagga and Cūḷavagga* on the structure of the *saṅgha* are important also in the analysis of the political organisation in the early Buddhist period (See R.S. Sharma, *Aspects*...).
129. G. Pande, *Studies*...
130. See, for example, W. Ruben, *Die Lage der Sklaven in der altindischen Gesellschaft*, Berlin, 1957.
131. The evidence of Bharhut and Sāñchī which present scenes from the *Jātakas* shows that these Buddhist stories were known in the 2nd-1st cent. B.C. Some authors however erroneously dated the *Jātakas* from the age of Buddha and even from the preceding period (see, for example, R.S. Mehta, *Pre-Buddhist India*, Bombay, 1939).
132. Studies of the *Jātakas*, and first of all of their data on the economic and social structure and commerce, led D. Jha to the conclusion that on the whole they had reflected the conditions of the post-Mauryan period, the

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period of the Sātavāhanas (D.N. Jha, *Revenue System in Post-Maurya and Gupta Times*, Calcutta, 1967, p. 43).

133. The *Divyāvadāna* ("Collection of Divine Avadānas") was composed and recorded over a very long time, repeatedly revised and edited by representatives of different schools and trends. This is attested by the presence of a number of interpolations in the text. As a single collection the *Divyāvadāna* took shape in the first millennium A.D. but its parts date back to an earlier time (See G.M. Bongard-Levin, O.F. Volkova, 'Ob odnoi pozdnei interpoliatsii v tekste "Divya-avadany" ['*One Later Interpolation in the Text of the* "Divya-avadāna"], [*Yaziki Indii, Pakistana, Nepala i Tseilona* [*Languages of India, Pakistan, Nepal and Ceylon*], Moscow, 1968, pp. 435-438; *Divyāvadāna, A Collection of Early Buddhist Legends.* (Now first edited from the Nepalese Sanskrit) by E. Cowell and R. Neil, Cambridge, 1886; S. Lévi, 'Les éléments de formation du Divyāvadāna', *T'ung Pao*, vol. 13, 1905, pp. 105-122.

134. This cycle is often called "A Cycle on Aśoka and Upagupta" since the tales are presented in the form of conversations between Aśoka and Upagupta.

135. P.H.L. Eggermont, *The Chronology*, p. 169. Eggermont does not agree with Przyluski that the basis of the cycle was Sanskrit chronicles (*Aśokarājasūtra* and *Aśokarājavadāna*). In his opinion, the Sanskrit versions appeared not earlier than the 1st century A.D., and before that there had existed the Pāli chronicle.

136. C.D. Chatterjee, 'Evolution of Aśokan Legends in the Avadānas', *Journal of Ancient Indian History*, vol. I, pts. 1-2, (1947-1968), 1968, pp. 112-130.

137. See, for example, R. Fazy, 'Note sur une éclipse du temps d'Aśoka (?)', *JA*. t. 217, 1930, pp. 135-136; D. Sidersky, 'Une éclipse de soleil au temps d'Aśoka', *JA*, t. 220, 1932, pp. 295-297.

138. For more details, see G.M. Bongard-Levin, O.F. Volkova, *Legenda o Kunale* [*Legend of Kuṇāla*] [*Kuṇālāvadāna from the unpublished manuscript Aśokāvadānamālā*], Moscow, 1963.

139. E. Lamotte, *Histoire...*, p. 271; G.M. Bongard-Levin, 'Istoricheskiye osnovy drevneindiyskikh avadan (legenda o lishenii Ashoki vlasti i "edikt tsaritsi") ['Historical Basis of Ancient Indian Avadānas (Legend of Depriving Aśoka of Power and the "Queen's Edict")], *Narody Azii i Afriki* [*Peoples of Asia and Africa*], No. 1, 1963, pp. 106-116. The long history of the Buddhist tradition about Aśoka is attested by the diaries of the Hsüan Tsang, who visited North India in the 7th century A.D. and left some evidence which is also encountered in Indian works (T. Watters, *On Yung Chwang's Travels in India*, vol. 2, London, 1905).

140. Aśvaghoṣa, *Sūtrālamkāra, traduit en francais sur la version chinoise de Kumarājīva*, par E. Huber, Paris, 1908; A. Gawronski, *Studies about the Sanskrit Buddhist Literature*, Kracow, 1919.

141. R. Mitra, *The Sanskrit Buddhist Literature of Nepal*, Calcutta, 1882, pp. 6-17.

142. See R. Mookerjee, *Authenticity of Aśokan Legends*,—"Buddhist Studies",

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ed. by B. Ch. Law, Calcutta, 1931, pp. 547-558; P.H.L. Eggermont, *The Chronology...*, pp. 277-279.

143. For more details, see G.M. Bongard-Levin, O.F. Volkova, *Legenda o Kunale...*
144. See T. Trautmann, *Kauṭilya....* pp. 10-67, especially pp. 47-48.
145. "*The Dīpavamsa*", *an Ancient Buddhist Historical Record*, ed. and transl. by H. Oldenberg, London, 1879.
146. "*The Mahāvamsa*", *or the Great Chronicle of Ceylon*, ed. by W. Geiger, London, 1934; see *The Mahāvamsa*, translated by W. Geiger, London, 1912.
147. For more details, see W. Rahula, *History of Buddhism in Ceylon*, Colombo, 1956.
148. *History of Ceylon*, vol. I, pt I, Colombo, 1959, p. 47.
149. *Samantapāsādikā*, vol. I, ed. by J. Takakusu, M. Nagai, London, 1924, pp. 43-44; B. Ch. Law, *Buddhaghoṣa*, Bombay, 1946.
150. See W. Geiger, *Dīpavamsa und Mahāvamsa und die geschichtlische Uberlieferung in Ceylon*, Leipzig, 1905. See also the publication of the *Mahāvamsa* (Introductory article by W. Geiger) and the section "Sources" in W. Rahula's work.
151. W. Rahula, *History...*, p. 21.
152. See G. Mendis, 'The Pāli Chronicles of Ceylon, An Examination of the Opinions Expressed about them since 1879', *UCR*, vol. 4, 1946, pp. 18-19.
153. *Vamsatthapakāsinī*, ed. by G.P. Malalasekera, vol. I, London, 1935, p. 42; see also G. Mendis, 'The Pāli Chronicles...' *loc. cit.*, pp. 1-24.
154. See W. Rahula, *History...*, p. 254.
155. *Vam.*, II, London, 1936, p. 687. For more details on the authorship of the *Mahāvamsa*, see S. Paranavitana, 'Mahānāma, The Author of Mahāvamsa', *UCR*, vol. 20, No. 2, 1962, pp. 269-286.
156. See G.P. Malalasekera, *The Pāli Literature of Ceylon*, Colombo, 1958, p. 133.
157. See L.S. Perera, 'The Pāli Chronicles of Ceylon', in *Historians of India, Pakistan and Ceylon*, ed. by C.H. Philips, Oxford, 1961, p. 29.
158. R.O. Franke denied the historical significance of the evidence of the chronicles (see *JPTS*, 1908, p. 1) and rejected the existence of an earlier layer in them.
159. V. Smith (*Aśoka*, p. 57) did not accept the data of chronicles on chronology before 168 B.C.
160. E. Frauwallner, *The Earliest Vinaya...*, pp. 13-23.
161. R. Mookerjee, 'The Authenticity...', *loc. cit.*, pp. 547-558.
162. See P.H.L. Eggermont, *The Chronology...*
163. See W. Rahula, *History...*, p. 21.
164. *Extended Mahāvamsa*, ed. by G.P. Malalasekera, (Āluvihāra series, vol. III), Colombo, 1937; see also E. Hardy, 'Notes on the Enlarged Text of the Mahāvamsa, Extended in a Kambodian Manuscript', *JPTS*, 1902-1903, pp. 61-69.
165. *History of Ceylon*, I, p. 51.
166. Geiger dated it from a later time—between 1000 and 1250 A.D.

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(W. Geiger, *Dīpavamsa and Mahāvamsa*, Colombo, 1934, p. 34.

167. W. Rahula, *History...*, p. XLI. The author of the chronicle used the *Samantapāsādikā* of Buddhaghoṣa and the *Mahāvamsa*. At the same time some data on the Nandas (the names of kings) differ from the data of the *Mahāvamsa* and the *Mahāvamsa-ṭīkā* and date back to an unknown source (see W. Geiger, *Dīpavamsa...*, p. 76).
168. *Thūpavamsa*, by Vacissara Thera, ed. by B.C. Law, London, 1935.
169. It has much in common with the introduction by Buddhaghoṣa to the *Samantapāsādikā*. According to W. Geiger, the author drew on an older Pāli chronicle.
170. *Sāsanavamsa*, ed. by M. Bode, London, 1897.
171. *The Nikāya Samgrahawa, being a History of Buddhism in India and Ceylon*, transl. by C.M. Fernando, Colombo, 1908. This is a historical 14th-century writing, but the author drew on earlier sources.
172. *Pūjāvaliya*, ed. by B. Gunasekara, Colombo, 1895. It contains evidence on the history of early Buddhism in India up to the time of the convocation of the council in Pāṭaliputra.
173. N.A. Jayawickrama, *The Inception of Discipline and the Vinaya-Nidāna*, London, 1962, p. XXXII.
174. Different viewpoints are dealt with in detail in the fundamental work by V. Agrawala (V.S. Agrawala, *India as Known to Pāṇini*).
175. P. Thieme, 'Pāṇini and the Pāṇinīyas', *JOAS*, 1956, vol. 76, No. 1, pp. 1-23.
176. According to tradition, Pāṇini was born in Śalātura, where the Kabul river joins the Indus.
177. See, for example, Y.D. Sharma, 'Exploration of Historical Sites', *AI*, No. 9, 1953, pp. 117-169.
178. B.B. Lal, 'Excavations at Hastinapura and Other Explorations in the Upper Gaṅga and Sutlej Basins, 1950-1953,' *AI*, vols. 10-11, 1955.
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180. Y.D. Sharma, 'Past Patterns in Living as Unfolded by Excavations at Rupar, *Lalit Kala*, Nos 1-2, 1955-1956, pp. 121-129.
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CHAPTER II

MILESTONES OF POLITICAL HISTORY

1 North India in the 6th-4th Centuries B.C.

THE MAURYAN Empire which was formed over a long historical period is associated with important changes in polity, society and economy. To grasp these changes one ought to examine the main trends of development not only of the Mauryan period but also of the preceding epoch.

The 6th-4th centuries B.C. saw the emergence of the first large states and the intensified struggle among some of them for hegemony. The sources refer to numerous wars and clashes between peoples and tribes, monarchies and republican confederacies and dynastic strife.

Unfortunately, much of our factual knowledge of this period is based on later and often poorly dated documents. Many political events known to us may, therefore, simply be fabrications of chroniclers, authors of religious *sūtras* and Purāṇic texts. Even when facts of political history presented in different sources are identical, there is still no guarantee of their authenticity. It is nevertheless possible to establish the basic development trend and the main stages in the political history of pre-Mauryan India.

According to early Buddhist sources[1], during the Buddha's lifetime[2], there were 16 *mahājanapadas* in North India ("great countries")—Aṅga, Magadha, Kāśī (Kāsi), Kośala (Kosala), Vajji (Vṛji), Malla, Chedi, Vaṃsa (Vatsa), Kuru, Pañcāla, Maccha (Matsya), Śūrasena (Sūrasena), Aśmaka (Assaka), Avanti, Gāndhāra and Kamboja. Certain data suggest that this list relates to a period somewhat earlier than the mid-6th cent. B.C.[3] The list did not, of course, cover every state in North India, but included only the largest and most powerful. In effect, their number was much higher than the above figure : Pāṇini, for instance,

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mentioned over 30 *janapadas*, whose names he used to illustrate grammatical rules, while the *Purāṇas* put the figure at 175.[4]

It is interesting that, according to Indian tradition, the first 14 of the 16 "great states" were located in the Middle Country (*Majjhimadeśa*), and only Gandhāra and Kamboja in the North Country (*Uttarāpatha*). This indicates the special role of East India, particularly the Ganges Valley, in the political history of India of the 6th-4th centuries B.C. and is evidence of the more rapid development of East Indian statehood.

Gradually some *janapadas* expanded their territory, while others were defeated and incorporated into larger kingdoms, and ceased to be mentioned as independent states. Magadha became the leading political force in that part of India, around which the unification of the North Indian states was centred. This region was first named in the *Atharvaveda* V. (22.12), then it appeared in various ancient Indian records : *Brāhmaṇas*, *Āraṇyakas*, *Mahākāvyas*, *Śastras*, *Purāṇas*, etc.[5]

Vedic literature paid no particular attention to Magadha; moreover, Vedic sources reflected a certain unfriendly attitude towards her population. In the period of the *Brhāhmaṇas* and the *sūtras*, she was regarded as a country outside the sphere of Brāhmaṇic culture and Aryanisation. The assumption that this was probably due to the failure of Brāhmaṇisation is strengthened by the fact that her population was connected with *vrātyas*, that is people who had drifted away from the Brāhmaṇic rules of life and no longer followed their "laws".[6] Orthodox Brāhmaṇas thought that Magadha was a place unworthy for sacrificial offerings.[7]

Ancient Magadha (the territory of present southern Bihar) held a very advantageous geographic, strategic and trade position. The rivers in the east, north and west were suitable for navigation, and their waters were used for irrigation purposes. Evidence has proved the fertility of Magadhan lands which were carefully cultivated.[7] Magadha maintained flourishing trade relations with many regions of India and was rich in mineral resources, particularly metals.[8] Its ancient capital was Rājagṛha (in Pāli, Rājagaha; mod. Rajgir), which was sometimes called Giribbaja ("Mountain Fortress"), since it was completely surrounded by hills. It was a meeting place of important trade routes, including those from Taxila and the west coast.[9] Excavations by Indian archaeologists[10] have enabled us to reconstruct the layout of the capital. The city

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with its citadel was the residence of the city authorities; it was well fortified and surrounded by a deep moat.

Little is known of the early dynastic history of Magadha.[11] More detailed information is available about Bimbisāra, who, judging by Buddhist texts, subjugated the neighbouring state of Aṅga.[12] This consolidated the position of Magadha, which took over an important port of Campā on the Ganges[13] and embarked on a policy of conquest. Sources report matrimonial alliances of Bimbisāra with the royal houses of Kośala, Vaiśālī and Madra. According to the *Jātakas*, after his marriage to the daughter of the ruler of Kośala, he received a rich Kāśī village, which brought him a considerable fortune.[14] Bimbisāra maintained friendly relations with the ruler of Ujjayinī (modern Ujjain) and Puṣkarasārin (in Pāli, Pukkasāti) and the king of Gandhāra. There is evidence to prove that the latter sent an embassy to the court of Bimbisāra.[15] Links with the remote North-East were established, according to Buddhaghoṣa, through traders who visited Magadha and Gandhāra.[16]

Magadha was especially strengthened under Bimbisāra's son Ajātaśatru. He had an encounter with Prasenajit (in Pāli, Pasenadi), the ruler of Kośala, who claimed back the revenues of the Kāśī village.[17] At one time, Prasenajit was lucky enough to take his enemy prisoner,[18] but later, Ajātaśatru gained victory and the rulers of Kośala acknowledged his suzerainty. He married Prasenajit's daughter and thus, like his father, consolidated his political success by matrimonial ties.

The victory over Kośala, however, did not signify Magadha's full domination of the Ganges Valley. In the north, there existed a powerful republican confederacy of the Licchavis. Both Buddhist and Jaina sources speak of the long struggle against them, which considerably influenced the general political situation. Clashes with the Licchavis, which had also occurred under Bimbisāra, over a Ganges river port, were renewed in the reign of Ajātaśatru.[19] Ajātaśatru apparently wanted to gain control over the river network, but the Licchavis had no intention of yielding the port to a hostile state and assembled a considerable force by the river. To repel their attacks, the king of Magadha had a special fortress built, Pāṭaligāma.[20] He made long and elaborate preparations for the war and, apart from military measures, resorted to political sabotage. Realising that the strength of the confedracy

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lay in its unity, he sent one of his ministers to the enemy capital of Vaiśālī (in Pāli, Vesalī) with instructions to sow discord among its citizens. Disguised as an ascetic, the minister managed to infiltrate the chief assembly of the Licchavis and raise dissension there. In a message to Ajātaśatru, he reported that this was the right moment for an advance against the Licchavis.[21]

According to the Jaina *sūtras*, at first success was gained by the Licchavis, who, apart from Kośala, were backed by the Mallas.

Jaina sources say that Cetaka, the head of the Licchavis had summoned the leaders of the Mallas, and the heads of 18 units (*gaṇarājas*) of Kośala and Kāśī and suggested that they join forces against the Magadhan king.[22] H. Raychaudhuri believes that this war, like the one against Kośala, was part of the general resistance to the rise of Magadha and the establishment of her hegemony.[23] The long drawn struggle against the Licchavis[24] was also the struggle of a monarchy against republican confederacies. Magadha proved unable to break their power; however, victory was finally gained by Ajātaśatru, who (according to Jaina sources) owed his success to the use of a secret weapon.[25]

Their military and diplomatic success enabled the Magadhan Kings to expand their territory considerably. According to Buddhaghoṣa, who came from Magadha and knew many local sources, under Bimbisāra, Magadha's territory (including Aṅga) was 300 *yojanas* and increased under Ajātaśatru to 500 *yojanas*.[26] Magadha's only serious remaining rival was Avanti, and signs of future hostility were already noticeable under Ajātaśatru.[27] Relations deteriorated further under his son Udāyin.

He, too, was unable to break the power of Avanti. That goal was achieved by Śiśunāga, the founder of a new dynasty, whose power extended over a considerable part of West India. With the rule of Udāyin tradition links an important event in the history of Magadha, the transfer of the capital to Paṭaliputra,[28] which was soon to become the most important centre in the whole of North India. The transfer of the capital to Pāṭaliputra, located on the Ganges, was proof of the consolidation of Magadhan power and a sign of plans for further expansion.

We know very little about the rulers of the Śaiśunāga dynasty. The *Purāṇas* and the Ceylonese chronicles only mention their names and the duration of their reigns. According to tradition,

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Śiśunāga was succeeded by Kālāśoka, whom scholars, following G. Jacobi and W. Geiger, identify with the Kākavarṇa of the *Purāṇas*.[29] According to the *Divyāvadāna*, Kākavarṇa's heirs were succeeded by kings of the Nanda dynasty.

Thus, in a comparatively brief period, from a small state in the Ganges Valley, Magadha had turned into a leading force in the whole of North India and had become the centre of a unified Indian state. This period was marked with fierce rivalry with neighbouring monarchies and republican confederacies, and diplomatic and political struggle. Many scholars, in effect, limit the history of Magadha to this alone, neglecting the complex social and economic processes taking place in ancient Indian society and determining, in the long run, the rise of Magadha and the emergence of a united state.

The development of economic and trade relations was disintegrating various provinces and regions. Political contacts were strengthened, tribal links were replaced by territorial affinity, and thus real pre-conditions were appearing for the merging of previously isolated territorial units into a single state.

The political life of the period was characterised by two trends : on the one hand, there was the quest for autonomy, independence, even within the framework of a small state formation, and, on the other, the striving for centralisation, for the establishment of a powerful state under one ruler.

The second trend was discernible as far back as the pre-Magadhan period, but it was in the period under review that it particularly developed and ultimately gained the ascendancy. The great empire of the Nandas and the Mauryas had emerged on the political scene.

The problems of early Mauryan chronology deserve special attention. Unfortunately, the first exactly dated Indian evidence is known to concern only the 3rd century B.C., and the *Purāṇic* lists do not contain absolute chronology, to say nothing of the fact that their information often contradicts South Ceylonese tradition.

Buddhist writers refer to Magadhan kings Bimbisāra and Ajātaśatru as followers of the Buddha. According to Ceylonese chronicles, the Buddha died in Ajātaśatru's eighth regnal year. If the date of his death is assumed to be 486 B.C., the beginning of Ajātaśatru's rule should be 493 B.C. (if, according to another

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view, the original date is taken to be 483 B.C., the second figure will be 490 B.C., etc.). The same year (that is 493 or 490 B.C.) concludes the reign of Bimbisāra, who according to tradition, was murdered by his son, Ajātaśatru. Ceylonese chronicles speak of the 52-year reign of Bimbisāra, which enables scholars to date its beginning from 545-544 B.C. According to the *Mahāvaṃsa* (IV. 1-8), Ajātaśatru (in Pāli text, Ajātasattu) reigned for 32 years; Udāyibhadra (Udāyabhadda), 16 years; Anuruddha and Munda, 8 years; Nāgadāsaka, 24 years; Susunāga (Śiśunāga), 18 years; Kālāśoka (Kālāsoka), 28 years, and his sons, 22 years. Thus, on the basis of the Southern tradition the following chronological pattern emerges : Bimbisāra—545/544-493, Ajātasattu—493-461, Udāyabhadda—461-445, Anuruddha and Munda—445-437, Nāgadāsaka—437-413, Susunāga—413-395, Kālāsoka 395-367, and his sons—367-345 B.C.

The list of the Magadhan kings and periods of their reign in the *purāṇas* (the details vary in each *Purāṇa*) has quite a different appearance. The *Vāyu-purāṇa* says that Śiśunāga ruled for 40 years, Kākavarṇa (Kālāśoka) 36 years, Kṣemadharman 20 years, Kṣatraujas 40 years, Bimbisāra 28 years, Ajātaśatru 25 years, Darśaka 25 years, Udāyin 33 years, Nandivardhana 42 years and Mahānandin 43 years.

V. Smith proceeded from the data of the *Purāṇas*, but scholars are now increasingly in favour of the evidence from the Pāli lists. The information from Buddhist sources on the Magadhan kings Bimbisāra and Ajātaśatru is linked with the events of the Buddha's life described with special care by his followers, who tried to preserve the ancient tradition with utmost authenticity.

The data of various sources clearly show the difficulties encountered in establishing the chronology of the pre-Mauryan rulers of Magadha. Each date should be accepted with necessary reservations and on the understanding that the proposed chronological constructions are tentative.

Unlike the Ganges Valley, where the main contenders in the struggle for hegemony have emerged and where Magadha had managed to become the centre of unification, North-West India presented a conglomeration of small states and tribal formations. Some of them (for example, Kamboja, Gandhāra) were mentioned in the list of the "great states", but on the whole, this part of the country differed from other regions by its traditions, culture,

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and economic and political development. Ethnically, the population was very mixed : along with the peoples of the Indian stock the region was inhabited by Iranian-speaking tribes.

At the end of the 6th century, a number of regions of North-West India were conquered by the Achaemenid kings and incorporated into their state. Classical authors wrote that the Indian provinces had already been conquered by Cyrus who, according to Pliny (*Hist, Nat.*, VI. 23), destroyed the city of Kāpiśa. Arrian's *Indika* (I. 1-3) says that the Indian tribes who lived west of the Indus (the Assakenoi) were under the rule of the Persians and paid them tribute. Xenophon in his *Cyropaedia* (I. 1.4) speaks of Cyrus' conquest of the Bactrians and Indians. Apparently, the Persian emperor ruled over part of Gandhāra : Darius' Behistun inscription (522-486 B.C.) mentions Gandhāra (I. 12-17), which he received "through the kindness of Ahura Mazda".

Strabo and Arrian, who relied on Megasthenes, regarded the Indus as the western border of India. In all probability, Cyrus possessed only the territories west of the Indus, which is confirmed by Arrian's evidence.[30]

Dariu's later inscriptions (from Naqsh-i Rustam and Persepolis), besides Gandhāra, mentioned Hindu as a separate province representing a special satrapy of the empire. That satrapy included areas along the middle and lower reaches of the Indus and possibly some adjacent areas. Apparently Darius added them to his empire between compiling the Behistun and the other inscriptions, that is between 518 and 513 B.C. Gandhāra and areas adjacent to the Indus were incorporated into different satrapies of the Achaemenid Empire, which can also point to the different times of their conquest.[31] The fact that the areas along the Indus were embodied into the empire is borne out by Herodotus' report (IV. 44) about the expedition of Scylax who was ordered by Darius "to find the spot where the Indus flows into the sea". The Scylax expedition was not only of strategic but also of scientific value. Thanks to this expedition, the Persians became more familiar with the Indian tribes' customs and traditions.

Heavy taxes were levied on the Indian provinces incorporated as satrapy into the Achaemenid Empire. Moreover, the Persian rulers used Indian warriors in their military campaigns.

Although the Indian territory, which came under the rule of

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the Achaemenids was small[32] and their suzerainty at times consisted only in receiving tribute, these areas could not fail to feel the cultural and political influence of Achaemenid Iran. The Aramaic language was widespread there; it was the official language of the Achaemenid chancellery and continued to be used even after the fall of the dynasty in the Mauryan period which is attested to, for instance, by the discovery of the Aramaic inscription in Taxila, the Graeco-Aramaic bilingual inscription and the Indo-Aramaic inscription in Kandahar, etc.

Many researchers have traced the influence of the Achaemenid system on the manner in which the Aśokan edicts are drawn up (the similarity between the introductory part of the Aśokan edicts and the rescripts of Darius, etc.), and some of them have pointed out that certain elements of the Achaemenid administrative system were borrowed by the Mauryan administration.[33] While noting the considerable influence of the Achaemenids on India, it would hardly be fair to explain the Persian impact on Indian culture.[34] On the whole it continued to preserve local features and its basis remained Indian. It is, in fact, with North-West India that tradition links the life and work of the great scholar and grammarian, Pāṇini.

In the Achaemenid period Indian goods had become popular in the west, where they were valued very highly. It is known that special kinds of wood and ivory were brought from the satrapies of Gandhāra and India for the construction of the royal palace at Susa. Elamite business documents from Persepolis of the late 6th and early 5th centuries B.C. contain interesting evidence about business trips undertaken by Indians to Persepolis, Susa and other cities of the empire. Judging by the texts, commerce between these cities and Indian provinces was thriving. Sometimes trade caravans were accompanied by over 180 men. A number of documents speak of Indian embassies to emperor Darius and of caravans sent by the latter to the Indian satrapies. It is possible that the Indians were not only traders but also served in the Achaemenid chancellery.

Indians are mentioned in Babylonian documents of the time. For instance, the documents of the Murashu banking house record that in the 5th century B.C. there was an Indian settlement in Nippur and its environs. Its inhabitants as warriors received land and served in the army. They were given the right to lease their

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plots of land, but had to pay state taxes and perform state duties.[35] The existence of such settlements invariably brought about close contacts between the Indians and the local population. A Babylonian document of the 5th century B.C. says that an Indian woman called Busasa kept a tavern[36] in the town of Kish (in Babylonia). There is no doubt that information in the west about India, her culture and the customs of her people had become more abundant, although it relates mainly to the north-Western regions.

The eastern part of the country was described by Herodotus (III. 98) as a desert, about which "no one can say what it resembles" (IV.40). Similar ideas continued to circulate up to the time of Alexander the Great's campaign, a campaign which marked a new stage in the development of India's ties with the outside world.[37] It had no mean impact on the development of Indian domestic affairs. It can be assumed that the defeat by Alexander of petty Indian dynasties facilitated the struggle for power of the future founder of the Mauryan Empire. But the substantial significance of Alexander's campaign should not be overrated. The Graeco-Macedonians subjugated but a small part of the country and stayed there for a very brief period. The settlements they built served, as a rule, military purposes, and were called upon to suppress the local population and to defend the invaders. It is significant that no Indian source has maintained any account of Alexander's campaign.

Writers of the ancient period have left us interesting information about Indian tribes and states in the period of Alexander's campaign, including evidence on the states in the eastern part of the country. When the emperor came to Hiphasis, intending to move to the east, he was told about the Gangaridae and Prasii tribes who lived on the banks of the Ganges, and their king Agrammes, who was very powerful, but scorned by everyone because of his low birth. This information, which came from the Indian kings, referred to the Nanda dynasty who ruled Pāṭaliputra. Unfortunately, reports from local sources on such an outstanding period, full of interesting events, are few and contradictory. Moreover, information on the Nandas is only to be found in later texts. As yet, not a single written document has been found which dates precisely from this epoch. What is more, this was an important stage in the political development of

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India when the foundations of the Mauryan empire were laid. The formation of the Nandas, which embraced not only the valley of the Ganges, but also the Western regions and the Deccan, was the first serious effort to create a united empire. Unfortunately, its history has not been studied in detail; the rule of the Nandas is one of the most indistinct periods, one may even say one of the most obscure periods, in the history of ancient India.[38]

Curtius Rufus (IX. 2) and Diodorus (XVII. 93) note that when Alexander came to Hiphasis, he decided to find out all about the countries and peoples beyond the river. To achieve this, the Macedonian leader summoned the local Indian king Phegeus and questioned him. The latter gave Alexander a full account of Agrammes, the power of his state, the strength of his army, etc. Anxious to corroborate his story, Alexander interrogated another ruler, called Porus, who was no less versed in all Indian affairs. Not only did Porus confirm Phegeus' information but he also gave some additional data. Thus the Macedonians' knowledge of the Indian states, and in particular of the state of the Gangaridae (Gangaridai) and Prasii (Prasioi), and their king Agrammes was based on accounts given by local rulers.[39]

A possible identification of Gangaridae and Prasii of the period of Alexander's campaign with the Nanda Empire no longer raises any doubts, but such a conclusion is not sufficient to relate the accounts of classical writers to any particular period of Nanda history. To do this, we must identify Agrammes with a specific ruler of the Nanda dynasty. Such an identification would also be of great importance for Mauryan history (particularly to solve the problem of Candragupta's accession to the throne and the chronology of his reign).

It has now been generally accepted that Agrammes (Aggrammes, according to Curtius, IX. 2, and Xandrames according to Diodorus, XVII. 93)[40] was the last king of the Nanda dynasty[41] (Dhana Nanda in the *Mahāvaṃsa*[42], *Mahāvaṃsaṭīkā*,[43] and *Mahābodhivaṃsa*).[44] But those favouring the identification have no solid evidence to support their conclusion and are content with a reference to certain similarities in the characters of Agrammes and the last Nanda king.[45]

A comparison of classical and other foreign sources with local documents shows the fallacy of the generally recognised view. According to the *Purāṇas*, the first Nanda king and founder

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of the new Śūdra dynasty was Mahāpadma and he is mentioned there as the son of King Mahānandin by a Śūdra woman.[46] It was Mahāpadma who laid the foundation of the Nanda Empire and who is referred to as "the destroyer of all the Kṣatriyas."[47] He became "the unchallenged ruler of the land". The Purāṇic lists refer to the first king of the dynasty as Mahāpadmo Nanda, Mahānanda, Mahādeva. It can be safely assumed that Nanda was his proper name,[48] while the rest were just epithets or titles.[49] This is borne out by the evidence of other Indian sources : the *Pariśiṣṭaparvan*[50] and *Āryamañjuśrīmūlakalpa*[51] call the founder of the dynasty simply Nanda.[52] This was the name by which apparently the whole dynasty was called. Particularly noteworthy is the evidence of the *Mahābodhivaṃsa*, in which the list of the nine Nanda kings who ruled after the ten sons of Kālāśoka starts with Uggasena (Ugrasena). According to Burmese tradition, the first Nanda king was Ugrasena-Nanda.[53] In other words, King Nanda, known also as Mahāpadma and Ugrasena, should be considered as the first Nanda ruler.

Local as well as foreign sources corroborate the evidence of *purāṇas* regarding the low, Śūdra origin of that ruler. According to Diodorus (XVII. 93), the king of the Gangaridae (Agrammes) was a man of "low station" and of unknown origin (adoksos). Curtius (IX. 2), quoting Porus, noted that the reigning king (reference is also made to Agrammes) was not only of ignoble but of the lowest descent (*non modo ignobilem esse, sed etiam ultimae sortis*). According to Plutarch, (LXII) young Chandragupta told Alexander of the humble origin (*dusgeneia*) of the Indian king. Indian and Ceylonese sources have preserved similar evidence. The *Pariśiṣṭaparvan*, for example, says that the first of the Nandas was the son of a courtesan (*gaṇikākuṣijanma*) and a barber (*nāpitakumāra*).[54] Information to that effect is contained in other writings,[55] including the *Āvaśyakasūtra*. It has been already mentioned that the *purāṇas* regard as the founder of the dynasty the son of a Śūdra woman.[56] The *Mahāvaṃsa-ṭīkā* sees him as a man of an unknown family—*ajñātakula*,[57] which exactly corresponds to *dusgeneia* of Plutarch, the *adoksos* of Diodorus and the *ignobilis* of Curtius.

Both Indian sources and classical writers refer to the "evil character" and "wickedness" of the Indian king Mohteria of Plutarch, euteles of Diodorus. The *Purāṇas* characterised the

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Nanda rulers as "unvirtuous" (*adhārmikaḥ*).[58] The *Āryamañjuśrīmūlakalpa* calls the first of them a "mean person" (*nīcha*).[59]

Accounts of a strong army of King Agrammes[60] are found in both kinds of sources. According to the *Āryamañjuśrīmūlakalpa*, the founder of the dynasty by the name of Nanda possessed colossal power (*mahābalaḥ*) and had a huge army (*mahāsainyaḥ*).[61] This is also indicated by the name of Ugrasena ("he who possesses a huge army"). Finally, it is easy to associate classical accounts about the state of the Prasii and the Gangaridae, where Agrammes reigned, with the data of Indian sources (say, of Hemacandra and the *Purāṇas*) on the vast empire of the first Nanda ruler.

All this enables us to identify King Agrammes (Aggrammes of Curtius and Xandrames of Diodorus) with Nanda (= Ugrasena = Mahāpadma), the founder of the Nanda dynasty. This Indian ruler, who had a huge army, was evidently known as Ugrasena. The first Nanda king, the ruler of Prasii and Gangaridae, was apparently called by this name by the local Indian petty rulers Bhagala (Phegeus) and Porus at their meeting with Alexander. This name based in all probability on the oral account of the Indian rulers, has survived in classical tradition in a somewhat corrupt form—Aggrammes and Xandrames.

This identification runs contrary to the generally accepted view, whose advocates have based themselves only on isolated evidence of classical writings and have not conducted comparative research into these works and Indian sources. So, from an account of Diodorus to the effect that a barber, the father of Agrammes, slew the reigning king and seized the throne, it was concluded that he was the founder of the Nanda dynasty and, consequently, that Agrammes was his successor.[62] Identifications were suggested to fit the given pattern—Agrammes was identified with Dhana Nanda, the son of the first Nanda ruler, and according to tradition, the last king of the dynasty. But if such an interpretation were accepted, the evidence of classical sources would find no confirmation in Indian texts.

Evidence of the classical writers to the effect that Agrammes' father had usurped the throne may seem to contradict our conclusion regarding the identification of Agrammes with the first king of the Nanda dynasty (Nanda=Ugrasena), but an analysis of the Indian sources dealing with the origin of the Nandas shows that there is no real contradiction involved.

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According to the *Mahāvaṃsa-ṭīkā*, the elder of the ten sons of Kālāśoka, who was the leader of a gang of robbers, captured Pāṭaliputra, the capital of the state, and declared himself king.[63] After his death, there ruled his nine brothers, who bore the family name of Nanda (*Nava Nandāḥ*—"Nine Nandas"). At the same time the *Mahāvaṃsa-ṭīkā* does not include the usurper, who in fact had established the rule of the Nanda dynasty, in the list of the Nanda rulers. It is only from Nanda (= Mahāpadma) that the *Purāṇas* trace the dynasty, although they regard him as the son of king Mahānandin. The *Pariśiṣṭaparvan* also declares Nanda the first ruler regardless of what it says about his father.

Apparently a barber, a usurper to the throne and a regicide could not be regarded as a king of the Nanda dynasty and could not be included in the list of the Nanda rulers.

Most of the *Purāṇas* name the son of Mahānandin as the first proper Nanda king, and he is placed among the kings of the preceding Śaiśunāga dynasty. It may be assumed that those who compiled the *Purāṇas* and listed all the ruling families had specially linked the Nandas with the Kṣatriya rulers of the Śaiśunāga family. We may recall that the rest of the Indian and classical sources refer to the father of the first Nanda ruler merely as a barber and a usurper of the throne, while some of them do not mention him at all.

Having studied the dynanstic lists of the *Purāṇas*, P.N.L. Eggermont concluded that they had two sets of chronology : a shorter (earlier) and a longer one, the longer one having resulted from adding a certain number of years to the period of rule of some dynasties.[64] In our opinion, the name of Mahānandin was only later linked with the Śaiśunāgas, but in fact he was the first Nanda king.

The mention in the *Purāṇas* of the connection between the founder of the Nanda dynasty and the preceding dynasty is, in our view, a later interpolation into the ancient original text. Such a conclusion tallies very well with the above-mentioned view that the *Purāṇas* (originally), like other sources, did not include the father of Agrammes (Nanda or Ugrasena) in the list of the Nanda rulers. It also confirms our main theses about the classical writers' identification of Agrammes with the first Nanda ruler, Nanda or Ugrasena.

The question of identifying Agrammes' father with a specific

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Indian king has so far remained open to question,[65] and its solution presents substantial difficulties (being an usurper of the throne, a regicide and a barber he, as we believe, was not included in the dynastic lists of Indian rulers), but when one compares the classical with the Indian sources, it is possible to trace a link between the king slain by Agrammes' father and the Indian king Kālāśoka.

This interpretation enables us to review the traditional interpretations of some events of that period. If so far Agrammes has been associated with Dhana Nanda and accounts of his rule have been linked with the final stage of Nanda history, and scholars have proceeded from this to tackle the question of Candragupta's bid for power, the new identification increases our knowledge of the first stages of the Nanda state. Substantial corrections will have to be introduced in the chronology of the Nanda and Maurya periods. Our conclusion makes it possible to establish that, from the beginning of Alexander's invasion of India and until his return to the West, Magadha was ruled by the first Nanda ruler by the name of Nanda or Ugrasena (Agrammes). Since it is known that Candragupta Maurya fought for power against Dhana Nanda, the last ruler of that dynasty, it seems natural to assume that the period was marked by a change of Nanda kings. In all probability, after the death of the first ruler, his heirs started a struggle for the throne which ended in the victory of Dhana Nanda.

This is apparently suggested by some of the *Purāṇas*, which say that eight Nandas—the sons of and successors to the founder of the dynasty—ruled only for 12 years,[66] whereas he himself had reigned much longer. The last of them was overthrown by Chandragupta, who founded a new dynasty, the dynasty of the Mauryas.

Data on the policies of the Nanda kings are rather few. Judging by the references in the sources, the situation in the country was very tense. The accession of a dynasty that was associated with the Śūdras ran against the established customs and practices of political life in accordance with which the reins of the state had been usually held by the Kṣatriyas. According to the *Pariśiṣṭaparvan* (VI. 244), a number of independent rulers did not wish to accept the suzerainty of a barber's son. Only by force of arms did he manage to bring to submission the unruly elements who dared to show disrespect for the king in the *sabhā* (assembly of the highest officials). The *Āryamañjuśrīmūlakalpa* speaks of the

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hostility between the king and his courtiers. Even classical writers were aware that the people hated and despised Agrammes (Curtius, XI. 2).

Nevertheless, the Nandas, backed by the army, managed for a long time to keep the Magadhan throne. According to Curtius and Diodorus, Agrammes' army numbered 200 thousand infantry, 20 thousand horsemen, 2 thousand chariots and 3(4) thousand war elephants. The numbers noted by Plutarch are even more impressive, and he stresses that "these are no empty words" (LXII). To maintain such an army, huge funds were required, and the Nandas sought to accumulate wealth and constantly replenish the treasury. This is particularly stressed by the sources.

There is an interesting account in the *Mahāvaṃsa-ṭīkā* (although dating from a fairly late period) that the last Nanda ruler, motivated by passion for wealth, levied taxes even on such items as leather, wood and precious stones.[67]

The sources contain some data on the religious leanings of the Nandas. Jaina texts (the *Āvaśyaka-sūtra*, the *Pariśiṣṭaparvan*, etc.) say that many of them were zealous Jains. The inscription of Khāravela from Hathigumpha refers to the seizure by a Nanda king of a Jaina relic which he brought to his capital. It is curious that the *Purāṇas* call the kings of that dynasty *adhārmika* ("devoid of righteousness, religion, morals"); probably such an attitude was determined not only by their origin but also by their departure from traditional Brahmanism.

The Nandas pursued a rather active foreign policy. The *Purāṇas* called one of the kings "the destroyer of all the Kṣatriyas". In F.E. Pargiter's opinion, he had indeed brought down the Kṣatriya dynasties mentioned in the Purāṇic lists—the Ikṣvākus, Pañcālas, Kāśīs, Haihayas, Kaliṅgas, Aśmakas, Kurus, Maithilas, Śūrasenas and Vītihotras.[68] It is difficult to say whether this was accompanied by any territorial conquests or whether matters stopped after the overthrow of the local Kṣatriya dynasties. It may be presumed that the Nandas had to fight the rulers of adjacent regions some of whom might have recognised the Nandas' supremacy. A number of sources speak of the inclusion into their empire of provinces whose rulers are mentioned in the above list. The *Kathāsaritsāgara* speaks, for example, of a Nanda camp in Ayodhyā, thus confirming Purāṇic evidence of the subjugation of the Ikṣvākus, i.e. Kośala.[69] The

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data of later South Indian epigraphy have preserved tradition about the penetration of the Nandas into South India.[70] From the Hathigumpha inscription we have learned that they ruled Kaliṅga or a part of it.

Thus the Nanda Empire covered a substantial part of North India and, possibly, even some areas of South India. It was for the first time in the country's history that such a vast territory came under the authority of a single ruler. Although the unity thus achieved was very shaky, the fact that various regions of India had been unified into one state was of great significance : it was in this unification that the foundation of the future Mauryan Empire was laid.

2 Candragupta and the Formation of the Mauryan Empire

Indian and classical sources have contained interesting evidence about Candragupta's struggle for power, although there is still much disagreement among scholars regarding the sequence of the stages of that struggle. Nor are scholars unanimous regarding the origin of Candragupta and the Mauryas. Jaina tradition does not link them with the Nandas, but locates their family settlement within the limits of the Nanda empire[71], specially stressing the fact that Candragupta, the founder of the dynasty, hailed from a rural area.[72] This tallies with the evidence of Trogus, who maintained that Candragupta "was born at least into a humble (*humilis*) family" (Justin, XV. 4). Only Ratnagarbha, a later commentator of the *Viṣṇu-Purāṇa*, believed that the first of the Mauryas was the son of King Nanda by one of his wives called Murā.[73] At the same time the *Purāṇas* make no reference to any relations between the Mauryas and the Nandas.[74] Some information about relations (not of kinship) between Candragupta and the Nandas is contained in the *Mudrārākṣasa*, a drama by Viśākhadatta. In it Cāṇakya calls Candragupta "*vṛṣala*", which led some researchers to regard the Mauryan king as a Śūdra. However, an objective analysis of the play gives no ground for such a conclusion. Besides, the term "*vṛṣala*" had several meanings : in the *Laws of Manu* it was used to denote Kṣatriya families that violated Brāhmaṇic rites,

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and in Medhātithi's commentaries, a person whose views differ from the traditional Brāhmaṇic ones.[75] In the *Arthaśāstra* (III. 20) the term is used to denote the followers of schools which, from the Brāhmaṇic point of view, were heretical, i.e. unorthodox. It is quite possible that in the *Mudrārākṣasa* the term is used exactly in that sense.[76] According to Jaina sources, Candragupta was a Jain. The *Pariśiṣṭoparvan* (VIII. 415) notes that he patronised heretical teachings (*mithyādṛkpāṣoṇḍimatabhāvita*). All this should have evoked condemnation from traditional Brahmanists, who could characterise the Mauryan king as *vṛṣala*, that is one who has departed from the orthodox religion.

Many sources disclose that Candragupta was born into a Kṣatriya family. For example, in the *Mahābodhivaṃsa* he is placed in a royal family (*narendrakula*); in the still earlier *Mahāvaṃsa* (V. 16), in the Kṣatriya clan of Moriya-Mauryas (*moriyanaṃ khattiyanaṃ vaṃse*),[77] and in the *Divyāvadāna* all Candragupta's heirs are called Kṣatriyas.

Some scholars, N. Seth in particular, believed that Candragupta came from Gandhāra,[78] but this assertion contradicts the data associating the Mauryas with Magadha. In the early Jaina *Kalpasūtra* (VIII. 1.4), the settlement of the Moriyas is placed in that region, which was a meeting place of many trade routes. Not far from contemporary Patna (Pāṭaliputra) lies More, which, in Buddha Prakash's opinion, is the ancient home of the Mauryas.[79] B.Ch. Law compared the name of Moriya with Moranivāpa, a place near Rājagṛha, the ancient capital of Magadha.[80] Megasthenes linked Candragupta with Eastern India (with the Prasii) and directly with Pāṭaliputra.[81] In the Minor Rock Edict from Bairat (Bhabra), Aśoka styles himself as king of Magadha. All this gives us grounds to think that Candragupta belonged to a Kṣatriya clan of Magadha—the family of Mauryas, and was not a Śūdra offspring of the Nanda family.[82]

The sources indicate that Candragupta spent his youth in Taxila, where he studied various sciences and, together with his tutor Cāṇakya (according to other sources, Kauṭilya) worked out plans for the capture of the Magadhan throne. As attested by the *Mahāvaṃsa-ṭīkā* (I. 181), Cāṇakya was the son of a Brāhmaṇa from Taxila. During Dhana Nanda's reign he went to the capital to take part in disputes. There he had an encounter

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with the king, who ordered that the Brāhmaṇa be ousted.[83] Cāṇakya swore to revenge himself on Dhana Nanda. He found young Candragupta and they began preparations to seize power. Candragupta's encounter with the Nandas is reported by Justin : the former's "insolence insulted King Nandra (Nandrus)[84] and the king ordered him to be killed, but he found safety in flight." Justin alleged that at that time Candragupta did not yet think of royal power. It is interesting that evidence from Buddhist writings coincides in many details with Justin's story, but they speak of the rivalry between Cāṇakya and the Nandas, whereas here it is Candragupta who is active. Justin may have been aware of Indian tradition including legends about Candragupta (*Candragupta kathā*).[85]

It is known from the *Mahāvaṃsa-ṭikā* (I. 185) and the *Extended Mahāvaṃsa* (V. 135-136) that, after completing his education, Candragupta, together with Cāṇakya, began to build up an army. They hired soldiers from various provinces and soon had a huge army.[86] This is also reported by Jaina tradition.[87] It is also not ruled out that it was the time when Candragupta, if Plutarch is to be believed (LXII), met Alexander the Great.[88] Mediaeval sources, including Arabic and Persian ones,[89] have given interesting accounts of their relations, but their historical value is rather doubtful.

This meeting, if it took place at all, could have happened after Candragupta's encounter with the Nanda King, and according to Plutarch, Candragupta expressed a very low opinion of Agrammes. He had not as yet had enough troops to fight the Nandas and tried to persuade Alexander to turn his forces eastward against the universally despised Indian king, assuring him of an easy victory. Some data make us assume that Candragupta favoured an alliance between Alexander and Porus, as he himself was preparing a powerful anti-Nanda coalition and was trying to persuade Alexander to set out against Agrammes.[90] At the time, he was still in the Punjab, where he was preparing for a fight with the Nandas.

Judging from Buddhist and Jaina traditions the first attempt to overthrow the Nandas failed. Candragupta was defeated because he allegedly did not ensure his rearguard. This probably happened after his clash with the Nanda king (Nandra according to Justin), but before his conquest of the Punjab (i.e. before

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ensuring a secure rearguard). The *Mahāvaṃsa-ṭīkā* says that, greatly desirous to seize power (*rajjam icchanto*), Candragupta ignored the border provinces and, rather than capture towns one by one, immediately invaded the centre of the country, which was why his army was defeated.[91] That this event may have taken place in the period preceding Candragupta's complete victory in the Punjab is attested by references in Indian sources to his alliance with king Parvataka after an unsuccessful attempt to seize the Magadhan throne. Accounts of this alliance have been mentioned in Jaina sources (the *Āvaśyakasūtra*, the *Pariśiṣṭaparvan*, etc.), in the *Mudrārākṣasa*[92] and others. Some researchers are inclined to identify king Porus with Parvataka.[93]

Since Candragupta had failed to persuade Alexander, and his own actions were unsuccessful, an alliance with Porus, the most powerful local ruler in North-West India, was of particular importance. Hemacandra has made a rather strange reference that Chandragupta and Parvataka (Porus) had agreed to divide the empire after their victory over the Nandas (*Pariśiṣṭaparvan* VIII. 290-299). Parvataka's claim to half the kingdom of the Nandas is also mentioned in the *Mudrārākṣasa* (II.17).

At that time, Alexander's forces in India were still quite considerable and it was senseless to advance against the Graeco Macedonians, but soon the situation changed radically. Accompanied by the bulk of his forces, Alexander moved westwards and then left the country altogether. The occupied territory was divided among the satraps including the Indian rulers.

Then events began to move rapidly : there followed anti-Macedonian revolts,[94] the murder of the satrap Philip, the transfer of the satrapy under the temporary rule of Eudemus and Āmbhī (Omphis),[95] and finally, the death of Alexander. All this could not fail to make an impact on the political situation, although Alexander's closest associates who gathered in Babylon, did not alter the division of the Indian territory. But the situation in the Punjab was very favourable for Candragupta, whose army was gradually gaining in strength. It is worth mentioning that the assembly of the *diadochi* in 321 B.C. was forced to introduce substantial corrections into the previously established pattern of administration of the empire. The *diadochi* now recognised the rule of the local Indian kings. Diodorus says (XVIII. 39.6) that they remained in their domains because it was impossible to drive

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them out without the royal forces. By that time, no Macedonian satrap, with the exception of Eudemus, remained in regions east of the Indus. It can be assumed that the changes in the pattern of administration were also due to the actions of the Indians, headed by Candragupta, against the Greek garrisons. This struggle lasted probably several years. In 317, having secretly murdered Porus and taken his war-elephants, Eudemus left India.[96]

Porus' death signified the exodus of one of India's most powerful rulers from the political scene.[97] It is possible that the murder was committed with Candragupta's connivance. The *Mudrārākṣasa*, for example, says that Cāṇakya and Candragupta had poisoned Parvataka to get rid of a dangerous rival and to consolidate their power. In this connection, an interesting passage in the *Āvaśyaka-sūtra* says that Parvataka's death had enabled Candragupta to take possession of his kingdom and the Nanda Empire.[98] He became the sole ruler of the Punjab.[99] Now was time to strike a major blow against the Nandas.

This sequence of events[100] has also been confirmed by the evidence of Justin, who dates the main stage of the Indians' struggle against the Greeks from the period after Alexander's death: "/India/...seemed to have thrown off her neck the yoke of servitude, and slew his satraps". Justin distinguished two periods in Candragupta's career : the struggle against the Greeks and the seizure of the throne. According to this author, Candragupta, who was fleeing the Nandas and was not as yet contemplating seizure of power, had assembled robbers (*latrones*) and "incited the Indians to change the rule. Then Sandracottus (Candragupta) started a war against Alexander's satraps" (XV.4.18). This passage apparently refers not to the overthrow of the Nandas, as many researchers have argued,[101] but to the resistance against the Greeks. It is tempting to see in the *latrones* of the source the "autonomous" Indians who could no longer endure Alexander's oppressive rule and rose against the foreign invaders. Indian sources say that Candragupta was assisted by some non-monarchic units of North-west India, whose inhabitants are often pronounced barbarians and robbers in Brāhmaṇic texts. In such an estimation Justin, following Trogus, may have conveyed the Brāhmaṇic tradition, which Trogus could have been familiar with.

It is known that, during Alexander's invasion of India, non-monarchical units in the Punjab fiercely resisted his troops. So

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it was only natural that Candragupta's call to rise against the foreign invaders found ready response among peoples accustomed to independence.[102] On the other hand, Justin's account can hardly fit in with Candragupta's struggle for the Magadhan throne, since the non-monarchical confederacies of the Punjab had not been incorporated in the Nanda Empire and could hardly be persuaded to wage war against a distant Magadha ruler, who did not threaten their freedom and independence.

It is significant that Justin mentions specifically the Indians ("incited the Indians"), as if contrasting the foreigners with the local population.

This interpretation of Justin's phrase fits very well with the subsequent text : "Then (*deinde*), when Sandracottus started war against Alexander's satraps..." If we believe that the 'change of rule' mentioned by Justin implies the overthrow of the Nanda dynasty, the question arises why had Candragupta "incited the Indians" against the Nandas while he himself started war against Alexander's satraps ? It would be more logical to assume that Chandragupta had called for the overthrow of Greek rule, raised an army (which included soldiers from the non-monarchical units of the Punjab) and then started war against Alexander's satraps.[103]

Having liberated the Punjab and assured a safe rearguard, he advanced on Pāṭaliputra, since his major goal was to capture the Magadhan throne and to establish a Mauryan dynasty. The victory over the Greeks and the liberation of the Punjab from foreign invaders had undoubtedly facilitated the attainment of that goal.[104]

Attention should be drawn to a very strange fact: none of the Indian sources[105] speak of Candragupta's war against the Greeks, whereas his struggle against the Nandas was reflected in the *Purāṇas*, in Buddhist and Jaina sources, and in the late Buddhist texts of Ceylon and Tibet. Can this not be accounted for by the fact that the war against the Greek garrisons was regarded merely as a stage in the long struggle for power against the Nanda dynasty ?

In giving Candragupta his due as the organiser of resistance to the foreign invaders, one should, however, bear in mind that ultimately this struggle was waged for the accession to power of the Kṣatriya dynasty of the Mauryas. Scholars, who tend to regard the war against the Greeks solely as a broad popular movement and a liberation war, fail to see its class nature,

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although Candragupta obviously did use the anti-Greek movement. In this respect Trogus' estimation of Candragupta's activity is quite relevant : "The leader of the liberation struggle here was Sandracottus, but after the victory, abusing the name of freedom he turned it into slavery; having captured power, he himself began to oppress the people he had freed from foreign domination" (Justin, XV.4.13-14).

On his way to the Magadha throne, Candragupta had to encounter the Nandas, who had a huge army. The *Milindapañho* (IV.8.26) mentions a fierce battle between their forces[106] and gives fantastic figures of the losses : 100 *koṭi* (1000 million ?) soldiers, 10 thousand elephants, 1 *lakh* (100 thousand) horses and 5 thousand charioteers killed.

Indian sources contain practically no mention of any specific facts relating to Candragupta's rule, and classical writers provide evidence only regarding his relations with Seleucus Nicator. Strabo (XV. 2.9), Plutarch (LXII), Justin (XV. 4.21) and Appian (*Sirica*, XI. 9.55) speak of peace between them, and Appian alone tells of hostilities. Seleucus, he wrote, "had crossed the Indus and advanced his troops against Andracottus, the king of the Indians living near him". This passage has given researchers enough reason to represent Seleucus as the initiator of the war, who sought to conquer territories east of the Indus and, with his brilliant victories, to surpass Alexander.[107] Such a conclusion can hardly be reconciled with the evidence of the classical sources which maintain that Seleucus paid more attention to the west than to the east. It is in this sense that one may interpret Justin's report to the effect that, *having settled matters in the east* (italics by the author), Seleucus started a march against Antigonus. He began to think how to strengthen his eastern borders. It must have been Candragupta rather than Seleucus who was the active force in this struggle. It is probable that the Mauryan ruler made use of the tense situation and the struggle for power among the *diadochi*, and presented his western neighbour with certain demands, wishing to gain control of some regions along the Indus and west of that river. Some of these territories had been previously seized by Alexander and had then passed to Seleucus.[108] Judging by the evidence of classical texts, Candragupta received a large area under a treaty. True, the evidence provided by ancient authors is very controversial, and this has led to divergent interpretations of this

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issue in modern Indological literature.[109] According to Strabo (XI. 2.9), Seleucus received 500 war-elephants, but in return he gave Candragupta some regions of Ariana. The part of Ariana incorporated into the Mauryan Empire apparently included Paropanisadae Arachosia and Gedrosia.[110] This has been testified by the discovery of Aśokan inscriptions in Laghman (Paropanisadae)[111] and Kandahar (Arachosia).

After the treaty had been signed, Seleucus sent his ambassador, Megasthenes, to Candragupta's court in Pāṭaliputra. This event must date from late 303-early 302 B.C. According to Appian, the two dynasties also concluded a matrimonial alliance.[112] Peace with Candragupta enabled Seleucus to embark on a long march against Antigonus, whose forces were routed at Ipsus (301 B.C.). The Indian war-elephants received from Candragupta played an important part in his victory.

The results of the war against Seleucus were favourable for Candragupta, too : he made substantial territorial gains while he gave away only one-eighteenth of the total number of his war-elephants.[113] The view advanced by some scholars that the Mauryan ruler had accepted Seleucus' supremacy can hardly be justified in any way.[114] In his account, Megasthenes not only shows no arrogance towards the Indian king but, on the contrary, stresses his might and glory in every way. It is also significant that even the early Seleucids sought to consolidate their ties with India.[115]

At the same time, the alliance with Seleucus enabled Candragupta to pay particular attention to his domestic affairs. According to Plutarch (LXVII), he "crossed and subdued the whole of India with an army of 600 thousand". By India he meant the northern part of the country, since information about the southern territories was very meagre at that time. Candragupta's rule extended to Saurāṣṭra and adjacent regions (that Saurāṣṭra was a part of his empire is indicated by a 2nd-century inscription from Junagad). The theory that he had seized some South Indian regions has not been confirmed by sources and can hardly be accepted.[116]

Candragupta continued to maintain close relations with Seleucus after the conclusion of the treaty. Athenaeus reports that he sent Seleucus unusual spices as a gift.[117] Diodorus (II. 60.3) tells of the interesting fate of the writer Yambul who, after long trials, was brought to the court at Pāṭaliputra. Diodorus

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refers to the king as a man who was fond of the Greeks (philellenos) and sought education (paideias anteksomenu). Unfortunately, the text does not mention the ruler's name, but it can be assumed that it was Candragupta. Judging from classical sources, he usually stayed at Pāṭliputra, and most of the classical writers' evidence about the Indian king in that city concerned Candragupta, since in the main this evidence dated back to Megasthenes. Strabo made a direct reference to the connection between Candragupta and Pāṭaliputra (XV. 1.36).

Hardly any specific evidence of his activities has survived,[118] but there is no doubt that the founder of the Mauryan Empire held a place of honour in the lists of ancient rulers. Even Ceylonese chronicles relate the regnal years of local kings to the dates of his life.[119] Classical tradition represents him as the greatest among all kings of India.[120] Even in ancient times, his name was associated with legends, whole cycles of tales were related to him,[121] and Viśākhadatta is known to have dedicated his drama *Mudrārākṣasa* to the events in his struggle for power.

Candragupta was succeeded on the Magadhan throne by his son Bindusāra. Little information has survived on the latter's reign and whatever is available is in fragments. In most cases, however, it is based on later Buddhist texts of India and Ceylon, as well as on Jaina works (above all, on the *Pariśiṣṭaparvan*). Classical writers' evidence about King Allitrochades (Amitrochades), whom scholars justifiably identify with the Mauryan king Bindusāra, is also fragmentary. Strabo (II. 1.9) mentions Seleucid embassies to the Indian rulers' courts : Megasthenes to Candragupta's and Demiachos to his son Allitrochades'.

Since the time of Ch. Lassen, who suggested that the Greek Amitrohates corresponds to Sanskrit *amitraghāta* ("the slayer of his foes")[122] controversy has continued to this day about the meaning of the name, although the identification of Allitrochades (Amitraghāta) with Bindusāra no longer raises any doubts.

Analysis of the political events during Bindusāra's reign has led scholars to believe that the title "the slayer of his foes", conferred upon him by classical writers, reflected actual developments of the period when the Seleucid ambassador Deimachos was at Pāṭaliputra. Rebellions against the central authority broke out in Taxila and the mountain regions of North India.[123] Apparently, some previously independent regions rose in arms

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with the purpose of restoring their autonomy. The situation at the court of Bindusāra was also extremely complicated : according to the evidence of the *Pariśiṣṭaparvan* (VIII. 446-447), a struggle for power was raging among the princes—the future successors to the throne—and among ministers for gaining influence over the king. Conspiracies were also rife at court.

Greek and Roman authors have recovered evidence of the diplomatic relations between the Mauryan king and Hellenistic Egypt and the Seleucid Empire. We have already referred to Strabo's account regarding the sending of a Seleucid ambassador to Pāṭaliputra. Athenaeus' accounts were more specific : referring to Hekesander, he reports an exchange of messages between Antiochus Seleucus and the Indian king Amitrohates (Bindusāra). He also reports the following anecdote : the Indian king asked Antiochus to buy and send him some sweet wine, dried figs, and a sophist. In reply the latter promised to send him only the wine and the figs, but said that sophists could not be bought or sold. Athenaeus' evidence has not yet been confirmed, but we have no reason to doubt the exchange of messages, especially as the existence of close ties between India and her western neighbour, the Seleucid Empire, is almost certain. Thanks to Pliny's data on the Egyptian Ambassador Dionysios, who came to India after Megasthenes, we know of diplomatic relations between the Mauryan Empire and Hellenistic Egypt. Pliny also names the Egyptian king who sent the embassy—Philadelphos. Undoubtedly, he means Ptolemy Philadelphos, who ruled at the time. The Indian king's name is not mentioned, but as Pliny speaks of Dionysios after Megasthenes, it is admissible to assume that Dionysios was sent to the court of Bindusāra. It follows from classical authors' writings that the Indian king continued to follow Candragupta's policy of further developing contacts with western countries.

Evidence of Bindusāra's relations with the states of South India is much more scarce. The minor Rock Edicts of Aśoka enable us to delineate the southern border of his empire, and their dating from earlier years of his reign allows scholars to assume that the above-mentioned regions were part of the Mauryan state under his predecessors. As noted by Tāranātha, Bindusāra had captured 16 towns (areas) and extended his rule from the Eastern to the Western ocean.[124] A number of scholars

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assert that some of these territories could have been in South India and formed a part of his possessions.[125]

Various foreign and Indian sources (particularly Buddhist texts) refer to religious life under Bindusāra. Apart from Athenaeus' account of the king's request for a sophist, some data from Indian documents show the Mauryan ruler's interest in philosophy. The *Divyāvadāna* tells of an ascetic from the Ājīvika sect, who exercised great influence at Bindusāra's court,[126] and the *Mahāvamsaṭīkā*—of Ājīvika Janasama, the king's[127] chaplain. Quite a few sources, including Buddhist ones, stress Bindusāra's allegiance to Brāhmanism.[128] On the whole one can accept his religious tolerance, which undoubtedly influenced Aśoka and his religious policy.

3. The Mauryan Empire under Aśoka

The Mauryan Empire reached its epogee under the third dynastic ruler, the son and successor of Bindusāra, Aśoka, one of the most outstanding statesmen of ancient India. He built up a state which stretched from Kashmir and the Himalayas in the north to Mysore in the south, from modern Afghanistan in the north-west to the Bay of Bengal in the east. The empire established diplomatic relations with the Hellenistic states of the West and countries of the East.

Sources do not provide authentic evidence about Bindusāra's heirs. Almost in all sources his son and successor to the Magadhan throne is called Aśoka : the *Purāṇas* refer to him as Aśoka, or Aśoka-vardhana; writings of the Buddhist cycle about Aśoka and Upagupta as Aśoka and Dharmāśoka ("Righteous Aśoka"),[129] southern tradition—also as Piyadasi. According to Buddhaghoṣa, Piyadāsa was the real name of the Mauryan Crown Prince. He was called Aśoka[130] only after he had seized power.

In the inscriptions of the emperor himself, this name is mentioned only in two versions of Minor Rock Edict I. Usually, edicts are compiled in the name of Piyadasi Devānaṃpiya (Skr. Priyadarśin Devānāṃpriya)—"King Piyadasi, Beloved of the Gods". In the Greek versions of the edicts, discovered in Kandahar, the Indian king is called Piyadasi (Piodasses); and

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in the Aramaic version, *prydrś* [*priyadarśi*]. Thus Piyadasi was in fact his real name[131] (in the edicts : Piyadasi, Piyadassi).

The honorary title "Beloved of the Gods"[132] was also awarded to other rulers of India (for example, Daśaratha, the grandson of Aśoka) and Ceylon (Tissa, king of Ceylon, accepted this title in honour of his Indian ally).

The total lack of epigraphic data about Aśoka's struggle for the Magadhan throne and his first regnal years makes us study the evidence of late Buddhist and Jaina sources, which contain embellished stories about the righteous King. Buddhist chroniclers refer unfavourably to Crown Prince Aśoka, Caṇḍāśoka ("Cruel Aśoka") of the first regnal years and seek to contrast him to Dharmāśoka, the Righteous Aśoka, which the emperor became after he had embraced Buddhism. Buddhist texts (for example, the *Divyāvadāna*) stress the unfriendly relations between Bindusāra and the future ruler who had not apparently been appointed heir to the throne.

If southern tradition is to be believed, Aśoka was sent to West India (Avanti Province) with its centre at Ujjayinī (Ujjain), where he stayed for over ten years. Learning about Bindusāra's death, he hurried to Pāṭaliputra to take over the Magadhan throne.[133] However, North Indian sources report his stay in North-West India, in Taxila (Takṣaśilā), where he had been sent by Bindusāra to suppress a rebellion against the king's high officials.[134]

Some researchers tend to regard Aśoka's march against Taxila as a purely military expedition. They refute the view that Aśoka was the ruler of North-West India with its centre in Taxila. True, according to the *Divyāvadāna*, he set out to put down the Taxila rebellion from Pāṭaliputra, the imperial capital, but the Crown Prince who was the ruler of a major province, did not have to remain constantly at his residence and could administer and exercise control through his officials. Apparently, in the city there resided the head of the local administration, who though he obeyed the central authority exercised certain independent powers. Reference to such a local ruler of Taxila, Kuñjarakarṇa, was made by Kṣemendra, a prominent 11th-century poet, who followed an earlier tradition as well as the evidence of *Aśokāvadānamālā*.

On the way to Taxila, Aśoka subjugated, or rather pacified, the

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adjacent province of Khaśa, which had apparently also risen against the central authority. The Tibetan historian, Tāranātha, also describes the suppression by the Crown Prince of the highlanders of Nepal and the peoples of other lands.[135]

Although disagreeing in respect of their facts pertaining to the period prior to Aśoka's accession to the Magadhan throne, all sources unanimously argue that the Crown Prince had to struggle persistently against his brothers to gain the throne. These events are depicted in great detail in the Buddhist texts of northern tradition. According to southern tradition, reflected in the Ceylonese chronicles, the rivalry continued even after Aśoka's accession, and the coronation took place only four years later. The evidence of the Ceylonese chronicles, which at first was accepted without reservations by researchers, has increasingly raised doubts. A serious and in-depth analysis of the sources, made by P.H.L. Eggermont, enabled him to uncover several versions (traditions) and to establish the existence of different chronological patterns in the sources. In his view, discrepancies of this kind have led to the conclusion about the four years of Aśoka's reign before the coronation.[137] The conclusion that the coronation immediately followed the seizure of the throne does not, however, rule out a possible fierce struggle for power with his brothers. At the same time, it is very important for determining the date of accession, which remains one of the most controversial questions.

Although numerous edicts have survived from the period of Aśoka's rule, we know virtually nothing about the developments of that age. The only major political event which the royal edicts refer to is the war against Kaliṅga, a powerful state on the eastern coast of the Bay of Bengal (contemporary Orissa).[138] On the emperor's own admission, it resulted in great bloodshed: 150 thousand were taken prisoner and over 100 thousand were killed. The conquest of Kaliṅga, a very powerful country, important both strategically and commercially, further consolidated the empire. This, we believe, was the primary role of the Kaliṅga war in the history of the Mauryas. However, a number of scholars evaluate its results differently and believe that its main significance lies in Aśoka's conversion to Buddhism. The view is widely held that the horrors of the war turned the ruler into a "dreamer" and that he allegedly abandoned the idea of forming a unified Indian state.

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It is sometimes believed, for instance, that the war engendered in Aśoka's heart feelings of sincere remorse and sorrow. Moreover, it produced important changes in his external policy.[139] The prominent Indian scholar, H. Raychaudhuri, has asserted that the Kaliṅga war opened up a new era of social progress and religious propaganda,[140] while India received a dreamer in the person of Aśoka. "After the war, he made no further attempts to extend his territory."[141] "The conquest of Kaliṅga strongly influenced Aśoka and made him profoundly sorry,"[142] and changed his hitherto expansionist policies.[143]

These assertions mainly single out two points : (1) the war led Aśoka to Buddhism; (2) after the war, Aśoka became a dreamer and abandoned the policy of creating a unified Indian state.

All these points of view are based on the XIII Major Rock Edict, in which the emperor speaks of his remorse. However, a study of the Aśokan inscriptions and the data of later sources do not warrant this traditional approach.

The XIII Rock Edict reads : "When the King Piyadasi, the Beloved of the Gods, had been consecrated eight years, Kaliṅga was conquered. 150,000 men were carried away from there, 100,000 were slain there and nearly as many died. Thereafter, when Kaliṅga had been conquered, the Beloved of the Gods now (*adhunā*) felt a strong inclination for *Dharma*, desire for *Dharma*, and instruction in *Dharma*. On conquering Kaliṅga the Beloved of the Gods felt remorse..."

In this edict, written not earlier than the 12th year after the coronation, the king states that *now* (author's italics) he felt remorse and a strong inclination for *Dharma*. This evidence, worthy of special attention, shows that a considerable gap in time existed between the war and the record about the emperor's remorse. Another point is also interesting: the inscriptions engraved in the territory of Kaliṅga—the so-called Kaliṅga Edicts (they substituted the XIII Rock Edict)—do not contain a word about the king's remorse, although they had been drafted before the major Rock Edicts. One can assume that in speaking of the war against Kaliṅga and hence of his remorse, Aśoka followed certain political goals.

Information of Aśoka's Minor Rock Edicts, the king's earliest inscriptions, seems to be very important for establishing

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the chronology of the events under consideration. Evidence of the emperor's conversion to a new religion can be found there. Thus, the Minor Edict I from Brahmagiri reads : "I have been a Buddhist layman *upāsaka* for more than two and a half years, but for a year I did not make much progress. More than a year has passed since I visited the *saṅgha*, and I have become more ardent." According to E. Hultzsch, the Minor Rock Edicts were promulgated in Aśoka's tenth regnal year[144]; according to P.H.L. Eggermont the Minor Rock Edicts were engraved "between the years 7 expired and 11 expired of Aśoka's reign."[145] If we accept even the latter date (the tenth year), even then the emperor's approach to Buddhism as an *upāsaka* should be dated from the eighth (or even the seventh) year of his reign, that is before the end of the war against Kaliṅga which, according to the XIII Rock Edict, began when the king "had been consecrated eight years." It is interesting that the emperor says nothing in that edict about his adoption of a new religion and only points out the necessity of developing *Dharma*, whose principles were already known to him and which were laid down in the earlier inscriptions. This provides grounds to assume that the war merely enhanced his attention to Buddhism and the spread of *Dharma*, but did not change his religious affiliation. The sequence of events which we have accepted as being based on the evidence of the edicts, is in agreement with the information of Ceylonese chronicles. Both according to Aśokan inscriptions and Ceylonese chronicles, the emperor became an *upāsaka* seven years after his coronation.

Aśoka did not discard the traditional foreign policy of his predecessors as the authors of a number of studies have tried to establish, although the methods of its implementation were modified in line with the new political situation.

The Kaliṅga Edicts and the XIII Major Rock Edict show that the conquered territory of Kaliṅga received a special status in the system of state administration and that certain difficulties arose in its incorporation into the empire. The emperor wanted to force the people of the province to submit to his rule. Ordinary people as well as Brāhmaṇas and Śramaṇas were subjected to severe punishment and even tortured. "It often happens," says the Kaliṅga Edict, "that a man suffers imprisonment or torture." "Therefore," we read in the I Separate Edict, "only a few think likewise (i.e., that Aśoka wishes happiness and prosperity to his

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subjects.—author), but not the whole of the land."

Most of the people of Kaliṅga were apparently against the new ruler and could not reconcile themselves to the loss of independence. The emperor, on the other hand, commanded officials to seek support from the local nobility (in the text, "good people").

The Kaliṅga inscriptions do not even mention the war and Aśoka's victory. This is due, of course, not to the feeling of remorse, as thought by D.R. Bhandarkar, but by the king's unwillingness to remind the local inhabitants once more of the circumstances of their country's conquest.

Typically, in the XIII Edict, where the emperor speaks of the war's impact on him, he does not forget to mention his power. "But the Beloved of the Gods . . . warns them (*tribes*) that he has power (*prabhave*) even in his remorse, and he asks them to repent, lest they be killed."

In many provinces added to their domain, the Mauryas apparently came across difficulties similar to those encountered in the conquered Kaliṅga. It was increasingly necessary to change tactics : at that time great attention was paid to the ideological consolidation of the huge state. General rules of behaviour and of fulfilling the moral duty—*Dharma*, whose observance was obligatory for all people, regardless of their religion, social and property status—were becoming the basis for the ideological unity of the vast empire.[146] The new methods, apart from the consolidation of the empire, aimed at increasing Aśoka's influence on the peoples of neighbouring territories.

From this point of view, the II Kaliṅga Edict is of particular interest, the emperor orders *mahāmātras* and judicial officials to seek the favour of the jungle and border tribes and to influence them through the spread of *Dharma*. The goal was set to "morally conquer" the border areas and regions far beyond the empire's limits.

People from countries as yet unconquered clearly had to realise that "as (one's) father, so towards us is the king, as he feels for himself, so he feels for us; (and) as (his own) children (are to him), so are we to the king."

Under Aśoka, only the states of the extreme South remained outside his domain, but even they did not escape his attention.

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The inscriptions stressed the need for spreading *Dharma* to all southern areas as far as Ceylon.

Evidence of Chinese pilgrims and of ancient Tamil texts makes us believe that Mauryan influence penetrated into the southern areas of India. Aśoka sent his missionaries there, founded monasteries and built *stūpas*.[147] Missions were sent to Burma, Nepal, the Himalayas, Kashmir and further west to the Hellenistic states. It is significant that the accounts of these missions contained in Ceylonese chronicles are justified by the data of Indian epigraphy (for example, the Sanchi inscriptions).[158]

Thus, there are no grounds to believe that Aśoka had discarded the idea of forming a unified Indian state and become a "dreamer". The opinion of a number of scholars that after the Kaliṅga war he gave up the traditional Mauryan foreign policy and became a "monk-king", repeat the tendentious assertions of Buddhist tradition, which sought in all possible ways to contrast the cruel Aśoka before his embracing Buddhism to the pious ruler after his conversion to the new religious creed.

4. Problems of Mauryan Chronology

The very important and intricate problem of Mauryan chronology, however, deserves to be dealt with at some length here.[159] First of all, the question arises about the beginning of the Mauryan dynasty or of the time of Candragupta's accession. Determining the exact date of this event is of prime importance because fixing a number of other important dates both in the Mauryan period and in other periods of India's ancient history depends on this. How widely the views of scholars differ can be seen from merely listing the suggested dates : 325,[150] 324,[151] 321,[152] 320,[153] 318,[154] 317,[155] 313,[156] B.C.

The identification of Agrammes with Nanda (Ugrasena) favours a later dating. It is known that Agrammes (according to our interpretation, the first of the proper Nanda rulers) was still on the Magadhan throne in 326-325 B.C., i.e. when Alexander was preparing for his march into India and when, if Plutarch is to be believed, his meeting with young Candragupta took place. According to the *Purāṇas*, after the reign of the first Nanda king his sons ruled for 12 years[157] and the last of them, Dhana Nanda,

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was overthrown by Candragupta Maurya. This allows us to date the accession of the first of the Mauryas from approximately 314-313 B.C. Jaina texts suggest the same date.[158] They maintain that by the end of his reign Candragupta had become a Jaina monk, and therefore the sources tried to preserve the tradition about that king correctly.

Let us return to the final stage of the Graeco-Macedonian invasion. As we have already mentioned, Alexander entrusted the administration of the Indian territories to his satraps and local Indian dynasts, who cooperated with the Graeco-Macedonians. After the departure of the bulk of his forces, anti-Macedonian rebellions broke out in North-West India. Philip was killed in 324 B.C., Eudamus was temporarily appointed, and in 323 B.C. Alexander died.

The assembly of *diadochi* in 321 B.C. had already earmarked substantial changes in the old system of satrapies. Peithon had left Sind, Porus' state had expanded greatly, the territory and rule of the king of Taxila were preserved. Thus the balance of forces in the Punjab had radically changed : apart from Eudamus none of the Macedonian rulers remained east of the Indus, although Porus and the king of Taxila were regarded as allies, or even vassals of a sort, of the Greeks.

It was only in 317-316 B.C. that Peithon and Eudamus, the last of the Greek satraps drawn into the struggle of the diadochi, left their Indian territories. Having secretly murdered Porus and taken his war-elephants, Eudamus left India.

The departure of Eudamus and the death of Porus left Candragupta the only ruler of the Punjab. He consolidated his regime in that part of India and activated preparations for a march to the east, against the Nandas. This means that, taking into account the political situation and the fact that Candragupta had to face an intense struggle against the last Nanda king, his accession should be dated after 317-316 B.C.

The following passage from Justin provides a justification favouring a later dating for Candragupta's accession : "Thus having seized royal power, Sandracottus possessed India, while Seleucus was laying the foundations of his future greatness . . ." Probably Trogus, and then Justin, in speaking of Seleucus had in mind the period directly preceding the establishment of the Seleucid era—312 B.C.—that is, when the basis of the Seleucid

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power was formed. Then Candragupta, who had seized the royal throne, already possessed India, that is, he had extended his rule to a substantial part of the country. The above passage from Justin shows that accession of Candragupta should be dated to the period immediately preceding 312 B.C.

The question of the date of Aśoka's accession[159] remains doubtful since the evidence of the *Purāṇas* and that of southern tradition do not coincide. According to the Ceylonese chronicles, the succession took place 218 years after the *Nirvāṇa* of the Buddha, but southern tradition contends that Aśoka ruled without coronation for four years, the coronation taking place after he had assumed undivided power (*ekarajjam*).[160] Some scholars, including Romila Thapar, consider this information reliable, while others (P.H.L. Eggermont) reject it. Nor are scholars unanimous in dating the *Nirvāṇa* of the Buddha. The dates 483[161] and 486[162] B.C. are the most probable. If the former date is accepted and the data of the Ceylonese chronicles about the accession 218 years after the *Nirvāṇa* are taken into account, we get 265 B.C., and if the latter is accepted, we come to 268 B.C.

Let us turn to the evidence of the king's edicts. The II and the XIII Major Rock Edicts mention some of the Hellenistic rulers : Antiochus II Theos, Ptolemy II Philadelphos, Antigonus Gonatas, Magas, king of Cyrene, and Alexander, king of Epirus. The fact that they are listed together suggests that they ruled at the same time. Research into the evidence concerning the rule of the above kings shows that the edicts should be dated from 256-255 B.C., when all these kings were still alive.[163] The major Rock Edicts were compiled 12 years after the coronation. Hence, the accession of Aśoka to the throne took place approximately in 268 B.C.

The Buddhist texts have carried the view about the construction under Aśoka of 84 thousand *stūpas*, which is supposed to have coincided in date with an eclipse of the sun and then the emperor's visits to holy places. Researchers have established that there were three eclipses during his reign—in 249, 242 and 232.[164] The inscription from Rummindei, which mentions the 20th year of Aśoka's reign, says that he visited the Buddha's birth-place. Buddhist tradition speaks of the start of the journey right after the eclipse. If we assume that the eclipse took place in 249, the date of accession will fall approximately in 268 B.C.;

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and if in 242, it will be seven years later.

Thus 268 or 265 B.C. is the most acceptable date for the beginning of Aśoka's rule. Hence, following the evidence of the *Purāṇas* about the 24-year long rule of Candragupta and the 25-year long rule of Bindusāra, it may be concluded that the Mauryan Empire began in 317 or 314 B.C.

This date is, as we have seen, confirmed by Jaina sources. It is also confirmed by data about the political situation in North-West India in the period after Alexander's campaign and is in conformity with classical writers' evidence.[165]

According to the Ceylonese chronicles, Aśoka ruled for 37 years, and according to the *Purāṇas* for 36 years, which makes it possible to infer that his reign ended 232-231 B.C. (if we assume that the accession took place in 268 B.C.), or 229-228 B.C. (if it took place in 265 B.C.).

Eggermont has recently advanced a theory suggesting a 27-29-year-long rule of Aśoka, which changes the chronology of the last of the Mauryas and some later dynasties. He has put forward a number of convincing arguments, but the final solution of that problem has not yet been reached.[166]

5. The fall of the Empire

Epigraphic sources for the final phase of the Mauryan Empire are very inadequate and therefore Buddhist legends about Aśoka are of particular interest. Most noteworthy are the reports that towards the end of his rule Aśoka was virtually deprived of power. This evidence has been carried in sources different in time and character : in the Nepalese manuscript of the *Aśokāvadāna,* which was part of the "*divine avadānas*", *Divyāvadāna;*[167] in the Chinese version of the "Cycle of Aśoka";[168] in the *Sūtrālaṃkāra,*[169] in the Sanskrit fragments of the *Kalpanāmaṇḍitikā,* studied by H. Lüders,[170] in the Chinese version of the *Saṃyukta Āgama;*[171] in the account of the Chinese pilgrim Hsüan Tsang, who visited India almost a thousand years after the rule of Aśoka,[172] in the *Avadāna Kalpalatā,* the work of Kṣemendra (11th century A.D.)[173] and, finally, in the work of Tāranātha, 17th-century Tibetan historian, who claimed to have used Kṣemendra's works, the Sanskrit texts of the *Avadānas* and their Tibetan translations.[174] A mere

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enumeration of these sources shows that the above tales were very popular and were current not only in India but also far beyond her borders.[175]

A lengthy account of the last years of Aśoka's rule is contained in the Sanskrit text of the *Aśokāvadāna*, its fourth chapter deals specifically with the events of that period.

The *Aśokāvadāna* narrates how, by the end of his reign, Aśoka had depleted the state treasury with his generous gifts to the Buddhist community (*saṁgha*) in order to promote the teaching of the Buddha (*bhagavacchāsana*). He nevertheless continued to send more and more gifts to *bhikkhus* (*bhikṣus*). At that time, his grandson, Sampadi (Samprati), was appointed heir to the throne (*yauvarājye pravartate*), and the royal ministers (*amātyas*) told him about the emperor's excessive generosity and insisted that he should be curbed. [In the text : *nivārayitavyah*, that is "he (the king) should be restrained, curbed, it should be forbidden him".] Sampadi, complying with the ministers' advice forbade the treasurer to give out objects of great value on the orders of Aśoka.[176] But that did not stop Aśoka's donations. His passion for donations still consumed him : he sent to the monks the golden dishes on which were served various viands. They began to serve the king's food on silver dishes instead of gold, but he sent these too to the Kukkuṭarāma. The same happened to the iron and clay dishes. Finally, Aśoka was left with half an *āmalaka* fruit (*ardhāmalaka*). Then he called together his ministers (*amātyas*) and townsmen (*pauras*), and asked them, "Who is the real ruler of the land?"[177] The ministers tried to convince Aśoka that he alone was the ruler of the state. Of particular interest are the *gāthās*, the most ancient parts of the *Aśokāvadāna*, which tell of the emperor's laments : "I've lost my power and own only half an *āmalaka* fruit." Aśoka told the chief minister, Rādhagupta, about the loss of his fortune (*dravyavināśa*), the ruin of the kingdom (*rājyanāśana*) and his loss of power (*āśrayaviyoga*).[178] "Before, when I gave orders no one dared to oppose them. Now my orders are no longer obeyed . . . my edicts are dead letters."

A similar passage is contained in the *Sūtrālamkāra*.[179] Having assembled his officials, Aśoka said, "My power is dead. When I had it no one dared to oppose me, no one was ever treacherous, and rebellions were put down; in the whole of the great

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land no one was able to oppose me." He asked them to carry out his last order : to take to the temple of Kukkuṭa half of the *āmalaka* fruit and give it to the community of monks there.

The Bhikkhus were desolate with the inglorious end of their master. They believed that Aśoka, the best of the Mauryas and the ruler of the whole of *Jambudvīpa*, had been deprived of his power by his ministers.[180] The Chinese version of the *Aśokāvadāna* contained a *gāthā* with a story of a *sthavira*, who told Buddhist monks about Aśoka's hard plight. He concluded his story with these words : "Now the king is ruled by a group of his subjects."[181] Hsüan Tsang too mentions that the ministers had usurped power and were enjoying a fortune that did not belong to them.[182] He quotes Aśoka's words : "I am in the hands of perfidious and powerful ministers."[183] Tāranātha says that some monks had visited the emperor who was able to give them but half an *āmalaka* fruit. However, even that gift was accepted with joy. "The goodness of this donation is much greater than of the 960 million gold coins that you gave when you were the autocrat."[184]

In other words, sources which contain data about the last years of Aśoka's reign suggest that his power was usurped by ministers and the Crown Prince and he was dismissed from affairs of state.

Some scholars believe that the above facts were invented in order to illustrate the Buddhist teaching of suffering[185] and to stress the implication of full renunciation of all secular affairs including power for the sake of the *saṅgha*.[186] Unfortunately, our knowledge of the period is very meagre, and epigraphic data are but fragmentary. But whatever little material we have at our disposal enables us to reconstruct certain developments of the period and to analyse the events described in later Buddhist legends which, in our view, had real historical content.

Towards the end of Aśoka's reign an extremely complicated political situation had developed in the empire. Internal contradictions were noticeably aggravated : the provinces, seeking independence, rose against the central authority,[187] the country was plagued by serious financial difficulties (which is attested by the literature of the *Avadānas*). Protest against Buddhism grew stronger, mainly because Aśoka, who had withdrawn from the traditional Mauryan policy of religious tolerance, had become a zealous champion of the Buddhist doctrine, and had given patronage and

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financial aid to the Buddhist *saṅgha*. The transformation in Aśoka's religious policy is attested by the "Schism Edict", which was drafted after the major pillar edicts. Evidence of the *Divyāvadāna* about the clash between the king and the Ājīvikas and Jainas is particularly noteworthy.[188]

Aśoka's pro-Buddhist feelings were bound to evoke criticism on the part of various religious sects and schools. The emperor had probably not only lost their support but also invited enmity particularly among the Brāhmaṇic circles, which were still very strong and had considerable influence on the spiritual life of the society. It is known that Puṣyamitra, the founder of the new dynasty of the Śuṅgas, carried out a pro-Brāhmaṇic policy. Sampadi, the heir to the throne, who had achieved great power by the end of Aśoka's reign, was, according to Jaina tradition, a zealous follower of the Mahāvīra creed and an opponent of Buddhism.[189] It is possible that the actions of the royal ministers intimately connected with Sampadi were aimed against the known pro-Buddhist policy of Emperor Aśoka.

It is clear that some facts dealt with here need further argumentation and documentation. For instance, the reasons for the king's dismissal from power are difficult to ascertain. It is, however, obvious that the hectic events of the final stage of his rule were not due to the emperor's voluntary abdication and his becoming a monk, as some scholars have tended to make out,[190] but to the tense political situation in the country, the beginning of the decline of the Mauryan Empire and the growing opposition to the head of the state, the discontent on the part of the heir and the royal ministers with his policies, etc.

The available data testify that at that period, Queen Tiṣyarakṣitā (in Pāli, Tissarakkhā), whom the emperor married after Asandhimitrā's death, began to play an important role at the court. Tradition makes her out to be an opponent of Buddhism. Buddhist texts speak also about her hatred towards Crown Prince Kuṇāla, the son of Aśoka by Padmāvatī, one of his former wives. According to a legend, Tiṣyarakṣitā cured the emperor of a disease and demanded unlimited power for seven days. She gave an order in the name of Aśoka that Kuṇāla should be blinded and put to death. At the time, Kuṇāla was in Taxila where he had been sent to suppress a rebellion.[191]

This and the evidence of the *Avadanās* examined above acquire

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quite a different meaning in connection with the so-called Queen's Edict, a small epigraphic document found on a pillar in Allahabad. Its comparison with Buddhist tradition, in our view, throws new light on some hitherto poorly explained events of the last years of Aśoka's reign and again attest the historical basis of the *Avadānas*.

The edict proclaims[192] : "On behalf of the Beloved of the Gods, *mahāmātras* are to be everywhere instructed as follows : Whatever gifts (which are offered)[193] here by the Second Queen, whether mango groves or gardens, or almshouses, or whatever, these must be regarded (or registered) as (gifts) of the Second Queen. This is the order[194] of the Second Queen Kāruvākī (Kāluvākī), mother of Tīvara (Tīvala)."[195]

Many scholars regarded the Edict as a personal order of Emperor Aśoka. C. Mitra was even opposed to the traditional title of the Edict as the "Queen's Edict", which had been in use since A. Cunningham suggested it.[196] He called the document the "Edict on the Queen's donation" to avoid the implication that it was issued by the Queen.[197] A. Sen is also of this view.[198] C.D. Chatterji suggested to name the inscription the "Edict of Aśoka on the Public Benefactions of Kāluvākī."[199] Scholars could not accept that under Aśoka, an autocratic monarch, anyone else could dare issue an order in his own name.

The edict does not give correct information about the time of its drafting, but it is generally accepted to have been issued during the last years of Aśoka's reign. It is engraved near the Minor Pillar Edict about the unity of the community (or the Schism Edict), and near the first six Pillar Edicts, but its particular position gives grounds to assign it to a later date.[200] According to V. Smith, this is the latest of the edicts issued under Aśoka.[201]

We must also note a very curious detail which has not been so far given due attention by researchers. Instead of the usual formula *Devānāmpiya Piyadasi rājā āha*—"King Piyadasi, the Beloved of the Gods, has spoken thus," the edict opens with the words *Devānam piyaṣā vacanenā*, "in the words of the Beloved of the Gods". This alone suggests that it was issued not by the emperor but by somebody else who, wishing to lend greater power to the decree, referred to the "Beloved of the Gods". Scholars have translated this formula with the words with which begin all Aśoka's edicts,[202] disregarding the difference in the text. A similar

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construction is encountered in the I and II Separate Edicts from Dhauli (*Devānam piyaṣā vacanenā*) and until recently they were considered to be the emperor's personal decrees addressed to local *mahāmātras*. However, M.A. Mehendale has convincingly proved that these edicts were sent to the *mahāmātras* of Tosalī not by Aśoka from his capital, as was previously supposed,[203] but by his officials during the emperor's journey across the country.[204] M.A. Mehendale's conclusion that the use of an unusual construction in the edicts is due to the edicts being compiled by Aśoka's officials rather than the emperor himself, is in conformity with our view of the authorship of the "Queen's Edict".

This conclusion is corroborated by our interpretation of the final part of the inscription : "this is the order of the Second Queen Kāruvākī, mother of Tīvara". The given interpretation fits in well with the data from Buddhist writings which refer to the important role played at the court by the chief queen Tiṣyarakṣitā, who received from the king the right to exercise great power and who issued an order in his name.

The "Queen's Edict" provides good corroborative evidence to the *Aśokāvadāna*, which cites Aśoka's words : ". . . my orders are no longer obeyed . . . my edicts are dead letters." Significantly, the edict refers to various kinds of donations, i.e., it touches on one of the central questions in the final period of Aśoka's reign.

Attention has repeatedly been drawn to the fact that there are no inscriptions dating from the very last years of Aśoka's rule.[205] The above data explain this fact. In the years when the emperor had virtually no power, his decrees were probably no longer engraved on stone.

The above data enables us to identify Kāruvākī, who issued her own order in the emperor's name, with Tiṣyarakṣitā of the Buddhist writings. We can also understand why Kāruvākī mentions the name of her son, Tīvara, in the edict. Kāruvākī-Tiṣyarakṣitā, who became the chief queen when Kuṇāla, Aśoka's son and heir, had come of age, naturally wanted to ensure the rights of her son Tīvara. This conclusion is supported by the evidence of Jaina tradition.[206]

Accounts of the rebellion in Taxila and of the dispatch of Crown Prince Kuṇāla to suppress it are of special interest. Such accounts have survived in a number of sources connected with north Buddhist tradition : in the *Aśokāvadāna* and its later

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translations, and in the writings of Kṣemendra and Tāranātha. The description of this event in the *Aśokāvadāna* and in its Chinese translations is quite similar to (and in some passages identical with) the story about the rebellion in Taxila under Bindusāra, which Crown Prince Aśoka was sent to put down. In both cases the people of Taxila rebelled against wicked high officials (*amātyas*), in both cases the kings (in the first Bindusāra, and in the second Aśoka) sent a prince to the rebellious provinces. He approached the town with his army, and the townsmen warmly welcomed him, telling him that they had risen not against the king but against the state officials.

According to R. Thapar, the evidence of the *Aśokāvadāna* about the rebellion repeats the description of the events taking place during Bindusāra's reign.[207] The author of the source connected the story of the first rebellion with the story of Kuṇāla's dispatch to Taxila as a ruling prince. However, one should hardly discard the widespread tradition about Kuṇāla's stay in Taxila. In this connection, we should mention the evidence of the *Aśokāvadānamālā* (the same data are referred to by Kṣemendra and Tāranātha) about a local ruler in Taxila by the name of Kuñjarakarṇa ("Elephant's Ear"). Both the *Aśokāvadānamālā* and Kṣemendra (followed by Tāranātha) depict him as the king (*nṛpa*, *mahīpati*) and ruler (*adhipa*) of Taxila.

The events in Taxila described by Kṣemendra and in the *Aśokāvadānamālā* manuscript are similar in many respects to the story in the *Divyāvadāna*, and in a number of passages the texts are almost identical. However, in the latter, Crown Prince Kuṇāla is always connected with townsfolk, whereas in Kṣemendra's story and in the *Aśokāvadānamālā* the Mauryas fight the Taxila ruler Kuñjarakarṇa. Although all these data are not confirmed by epigraphic documents and the name Kuñjarakarṇa is not mentioned in any of the well-known sources, they deserve close attention.

We should note, above all, that both groups of sources speak of indignation against the officials (*amātyas*), who represented the state provincial administration, as the reason for the rebellion. Local inhabitants clashed with the state authorities. Kuñjarakarṇa who led the rebellion was probably the head of the local town administration. At the meeting with the Crown Prince he objected to the state *amātyas*, who passed unfair sentences and

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ruled arbitrarily. According to Kṣemendra and the *Aśokāvadānamālā* Kuñjarakarṇa had considerable authority: it is him that Tisyarakṣitā approached with her order (as though issued on behalf of the king) that Kuṇāla should be blinded. The same is suggested by Kuñjarakarṇa's titles – king, and the ruler of Taxila. In the royal message he is also referred to as the ruler of the town (*Takṣaśilādhināṭha*). Kuñjarakarṇa, however, was not a prince, the province's ruler, which only an offspring of the royal Mauryan family could be, but was the head of the local administrative apparatus, which functioned alongside the imperial state machinery.

It is tempting to treat the information of the sources about Kuñjarakarṇa's considerable power as evidence of the beginning of the decline of the Mauryan Empire, which became particularly obvious in the last years of Aśoka's rule. The Mauryas probably could no longer exercise proper control over all distant provinces of the country, which revolted against the central authority in their bid for independence. Therefore, Aśoka had again to send Crown Prince Kuṇāla to Taxila to subjugate the local ruler to the authority of the Mauryas. Other writings related to the cycle of legends about Aśoka and Kuṇāla also contain data on the latter's stay in Taxila, although different reasons are given. The *Kuṇālasūtra*, one of the most ancient sources, does not even mention the rebellion. It says that after the death of the king of Gandhāra, the people came under Aśoka's power, who sent his son, Dharmavivardhana, to rule the province. Under his rule Gandhāra reached such prosperity and its fame spread so far that Aśoka decided to divide his empire into two parts : the lands from the Himalayas to the sea he left under his own rule and the rest of the land was given over to Kuṇāla.[208]

One may also find in this record a suggestion of the decline of the Mauryan empire : the central authority was unable to ensure strict control over the entire territory and was forced to part with some outlying provinces where forces seeking autonomy were particularly strong.

However, it is more likely that the division took place after Aśoka's death, when his successors divided the land among themselves :[209] the western provinces could have passed to Kuṇāla, and the eastern lands with the capital at Pāṭaliputra remained under the rule of Sampadi or Daśaratha (if their simultaneous rule is

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accepted). According to the *Pariśiṣṭaparvan* (IX.54), Sampadi (Samprati) ruled half of India, including southern areas, and exercised his control from Ujjayanī and Pāṭaliputra (another proof of the empire's disintegration).

Eggermont disapproved the view that the empire was divided. In his opinion, Aśoka was succeeded by Daśaratha, who managed to preserve intact the empire's unity. Kuṇāla, on the other hand, was not at all a Mauryan king and independent ruler of the western province.[210] If the version about his having been blinded is true, he could not have possibly been crowned. According to Eggermont, Sampadi succeeded to the throne[211] after Daśaratha's eight-year reign.

The question of the last Mauryas is unclear and is far from being finally solved. The data contained in the sources relating to Aśoka's heirs are fragmentary and open to doubt; therefore the story of the reign of his heirs is mainly hypothetical. A little over half a century separated the death of Aśoka from Puṣyamitra's seizure of the throne, but during that period quite a few rulers came and went, which again suggests the empire's decline. Even the *Purāṇas* present different lists of Aśoka's successors. According to the *Vāyu-Purāṇa* and the *Brahmāṇḍa-Purāṇa*, Kuṇāla was his successor, but according to the *Matsya-Purāṇa*, it was Daśaratha. The *Viṣṇu-Purāṇa* also names Daśaratha, but as the son of king Suyaśas.[212] Some of the Buddhist and many Jaina texts call Sampadi Aśoka's successor,[213] but the *Matsya-Purāṇa* regards him as Daśaratha's son. Inscriptions mention only Tīvara and Daśaratha. The former is referred to in the "Queen's Edict" as the son of Kāruvākī. Daśaratha is mentioned in the inscriptions from the Nagarjuni Hills, which say that the caves had been donated to the Ājīvikas. The text refers to him as "Devanāṃpiya" ("Beloved of the Gods") apparently in honour of Aśoka. V. Smith thought that the language and the style of the inscriptions were so similar to those of Aśokan edicts that one could see Daśaratha as his direct heir, at least in the eastern provinces.[214]

The Kashmiri historian, Kalhaṇa,[215] records the ancient tradition about the rule in Kashmir of Aśoka's son, Jalauka, who is said to have expanded his rule to Kanauj and who had to withstand the onslaught of the Mlecchas. Researchers are not unanimous in the interpretation of this account. Some of them (R.K. Mookerjee) believe that the Mlecchas were in fact the

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Graeco-Bactrians,[216] while others (A.K. Narain) object to this.[217] The only dated fact of late Mauryan history is the event in 206 B.C. when the Seleucid king, Antiochus the Great (223-187 B.C.), after successful campaigns in Armenia and Parthia and the conclusion of a treaty with the Bactrian king, Euthydemos, crossed the Hindukush and "renewed his alliance (*Philia*)"[218] with the Indian king, Sophagasenos" (Polibius, XI.34). Polibius also reports that Antiochus received from India war-elephants and provisions for his army, after which he set out to Carmania via Arachosia and Drangiana.

There exist a host of viewpoints regarding the identification of the Indian king. W.W. Tarn believed that reference was being made to a Mauryan ruler.[219] Recently, he was joined by P.H.L. Eggermont who suggested identifying Sophagasenos (Subhāgasena) with the Mauryan king Somasarman (Somaśarman), mentioned in the *Bhāgavata-Purāṇa* and the *Viṣṇu-Purāṇa*.[220] A.K. Narain regarded him as an independent ruler of the North-West.[221] In any case, it is evident that Sophagasenos (Subhāgasena) exercised sufficient influence if the powerful Antiochus, after his brilliant march, renewed through him the Seleucids' old relations with India. But according to Polibius, the provisions of the new alliance were not equal : Antiochus not only received elephants and provisions but also continued his march deep inside the territories which had previously belonged to the Mauryas (Arachosia was part of Aśoka's Empire). Apparently, by 206 B.C. they had lost some of their western provinces.

It is albeit probable that in certain periods, Aśoka's heirs managed nominally to preserve the unity of the state, but in fact, the unity of the empire was fast eroding. The accession of Puṣyamitra marked the final collapse of the Mauryas and the rise of the Śuṅgas. Indian tradition records that Bṛhadratha, the last of the Mauryan rulers was slain by Puṣyamitra, who led his army against him, seized the Magadhan throne and founded a new dynasty.[222]

The disintegration of one of the greatest ancient empires of the East was due to a number of domestic and external reasons. The state's vast territory incorporated provinces which were at different stages of economic and social development. Tribes and peoples

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who spoke a multitude of languages were united by conquest. Their lives continued to be centred on local customs, standards and traditions, and only politically they represented a state entity headed by a monarch. The central power maintained unity by means of a well-regulated system of administration, a strong army and the policy of *Dharmavijaya* (literally "conquest with the aid of *Dharma*). It is understandable that the weakening of that authority immediately impaired this unstable unity.

Some scholars have regarded Aśoka's policies, which undermined the power of the state and disorganised the administration of the country, as the reason for the empire's downfall. H. Raychaudhuri, for example, wrote that "India needed men of calibre of Porus and Candragupta to ensure her protection, but she got a dreamer."[223]

In our view, it was not loyalty to the policy of *Dharmavijaya* but rather its abandonment that adversely affected the empire's strength. Aśoka's pro-Buddhist policy, which he carried out in the last years of his life, gave rise to strong opposition, especially among the Brāhmaṇic circles that were still strong both economically and politically. In this respect, H. Śastri is right when he referred to the reaction of the Brāhmaṇas as a reason for the decline of the state of the Mauryas, although, on the whole, Sastri's characterisation of the emperor's policy as anti-Bhāhmaṇic is incorrect.[224]

Aśoka's successors apparently abandoned the policy of *Dharmavijaya*, which would have had adverse consequences in the tense situation arising after Aśoka's death. The *Yuga-Purāṇa* calls Śāliśūka, one of the last Mauryas, as one "who has abandoned *Dharma*" (*adharmikaḥ*).[225]

R. Thapar specially stresses the weakness of Aśoka's successors, who proved unable to maintain the eroding unity and divided the empire.[226] The external danger from the Graeco-Bactrians must also be mentioned.

Each factor taken separately does not answer the question as to why the empire fell, but viewed together they enable us to understand why it had become impossible to further preserve the state's unity. Neither the Śuṅgas who had seized power nor their successors could restore its former might.

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Notes and References

1. *Aṅg. N.*, II, 213; IV. 252, 256.
2. Accepted dating : 563-483 B.C.
3. The list of the "great" independent states includes Aṅga conquered, by the Magadhan king, Bimbisāra (545-493 B.C.), during the first stage of his rule, and Kāśī. Under Mahākośala, king of Kośala (*c.* the 6th cent. B.C.), it was incorporated into his state. With some none too significant modifications the list occurs in various parts of the Buddhist canon, which implies the existence of the *Mahājanapadas* in the period preceding the emergence of the Pāli canonic *sūtras*.

   Jaina texts provide another list. It contains some names of South Indian provinces and is dated from a later period (H. Raychaudhuri, *Political History . . .*, p. 96). The *Niddesa* adds Kaliṅga to the list of 16 *Mahājanapadas*, and instead of Gandhāra, mentions the country of Yona *Cūlla-Niddesa*, ed. by W. Stede, (1918, p. 37).
4. D.C. Sircar, 'The Text of the Purāṇic List of Peoples,' *IHQ*, vol. 20, 1945, pp. 297-314; by the same author, *Studies in the Geography of Ancient and Medieval India*, Delhi, 1960, pp. 17-38.
5. For more detail, see B. Ch. Law, *The Magadhas in Ancient India*, London, 1946.
6. See R. Choudhary, *Vrātyas in Ancient India*, Varanasi, 1964.
7. See Buddha Prakash, *Studies in Indian History and Civilization*, Agra, 1962, p. 179.
8. For example, *Mahāvagga*, VP, I, 287; *Sam.* V, 1127; *Theragāthā*, 208.
9. B. Ch. Law, *Rājagṛha in Ancient Literature*, MASI, No. 58, Delhi, 1938.
10. See A. Ghosh, 'Rājgir 1950', *AI*, No. 7, 1951, pp. 66-78.
11. For more detail, see K. Chattopadhyaya, 'The Kings of Magadha from the Bṛhadrathas till the Mauryas', *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, Lahore, 1940, pp. 140-147; S.V. Venkateswara Aiyar, 'The Ancient History of Magadha,' *Ind. Ant.*, 1915, pp. 173-185.
12. For example, *Dīg.*—*N.* IV. 1-2. Bimbisāra is sometimes referred to as the king of Aṅga-Magadha (VP, I. 27).
13. St. G. Darian, 'The Economic History of the Ganges to the End of Gupta Times, *JESHO*, vol. 13, pt. 1, 1970, p. 63.
14. According to commentaries, the granting of the right to collect taxes from a village in Kāśī is being referred to here (For more details, see V. Pathak, *History of Kośala up to the Rise of the Mauryas*, Banaras, 1953, pp. 211-212).
15. *The Age of the Imperial Unity*, p. 14; *DPPN*, vol. 2, pp. 214-216.
16. *Pap.* I. 979.
17. Kośala was one of the strongest states in North India. By the period of Prasenajit's rule, it had gained victory over Kāśī after a long war. Sources often refer to Prasenajit as king of Kāśī-Kośala (*Aṅg. N.*, V. 59). Some data indicate the latter's rule over the Śākyas, a powerful confederacy in North-East India (*DPPN*, vol. I, pp. 696-697).
18. *Sam.*—*N.*, I. 82, 86; *Sār.*, I. 154.

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19. *Sum.* II. 522-526. According to Buddhist tradition, when Buddha set out for Vaiśālī, the capital of the Licchavis, Bimbisāra ordered a road from Rājagṛha to the Ganges to be laid, and the Licchavis built the road from the river to Vaiśālī. In the *Div.* (p. 55) there is a reference to the effect that the monks who went from Śrāvastī (capital of Kośala) to Rājagṛha could cross the river in boats, owned either by the Magadha king, Ajātaśatru, or the Licchavis. The *Suttavibhaṅga* (IV.9.5) preserves a story about the clash between Bimbisāra and the Licchavis. The Licchavis gained preliminary successes but Bimbisāra later assembled a new army and routed them (see also *Sum.*, II. 513).
20. See *Dīg N.*, II. 72-73.
21. *Sum.*, II. 522.
22. H.C. Raychaudhuri, 'Notes on Kośalas, Eighteen of Gaṇarājas of Kāśī-Kośala', *IC*, II, pp. 806-809; R. Dikshitar, 'A Note on Gaṇarājya', *ABORI*, vol. 23, 1942, pp. 103-106.
23. H. Raychaudhuri, *Political History . . .*, p. 213.
24. A number of sources report that the war lasted for 16 years, *The Age of Imperial Unity*, pp. 25-26.
25. For details, see A.L. Basham, 'Ajātasattu's War with the Licchavis', in *Studies in Indian History and Culture*, Calcutta, 1964.
26. *Sum.*, I. 148. Sources report that during Bimbisāra's reign Magadha included 80 thousand villages (*gāma*), (*Mahāvagga*, V. 1).
27. According to *Maj. N.* (III. 7), Ajātaśatru had fortified his capital, expecting an attack by the king Avanti.
28. *Pariśiṣṭaparvan*, VI. 34, 175-188.
29. See *The Mahāvaṃsa or the Great Chronicle of Ceylon*, Colombo, 1960, pp. 6-7.
30. Strabo (XV.1.6), who referred to Megasthenes, and Arrian, who referred to Nearchus (*Ind.*, IX. 10; V. 1—7), noted that Cyrus had never invaded India and had not conquered any Indian provinces.
31. Herodotus, III. 91-94.
32. There is still much disagreement among scholars about the Indian possessions of the Achaemenids (R.C. Majumdar, 'Achaemenian Rule in India,' *IHQ*, vol. 25, No. 3, 1949, pp. 153-165.
33. For example, *Age of the Nandas and Mauryas*, pp. 173-174; *A Comprehensive History of India*; R.A. Jairazbhoy, *Foreign Influence in Ancient India*, London, 1963; Buddha Prakash, *Political and Social Movements in Ancient Panjab*, Delhi, 1964.
34. For critical comments on this view, see U.N. Ghoshal, 'The Alleged Achaemenid and Helenistic Influences upon the Administration of the Maurya Empire',—*J.N. Banerjee Volume*, Calcutta, 1960, pp. 76-86.
35. Evidence of Elamite and Babylonian documents was kindly made available by M.A. Dandamayev to whom the author offers his sincere gratitude. See 'Noviye documenty tsarskogo khoziaistva v. Irane (509-494 gg. do n.e.') ['New Documents of the Royal Household in Iran (509-494 B.C.)'], *Vestnik drevnei istorii* [*Bulletin of Ancient History*], No. 1, 1972, p. 25.
36. See A. Olmstead, *History of the Persian Empire*, Chicago, 1948, p. 145.

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37. For more details, see G.M. Bongard-Levin, G.F. Ilyin, *Drevniaya India*, [*Ancient India*], pp. 231-235.
38. *CHI*, p. 164.
39. We shall mention the obviously erroneous identification of Agrammes with Candragupta proposed at one time : *Xandrames* by Diodorus, Sanskrit—Candramas (moon month) = Candragupta (see McCrindle, *Invasion . . .*, p. 221; Venkateswara Aiyar, 'The Ancient History of Magadha', *loc. cit.*, pp. 41-52).
40. Sacra? (mes?) in *Enitome Mettensis* (107, 7-15); quoted from O. Stein, 'The Coronation of Chandragupta Maurya', *AO*, I, No. 1, 1929, pp. 355-357; M. Bussagli, 'Indian Events in Trogus Pompeius', *EW*, vol. 8., No. 3, 1956, p. 237.
41. We refer only to some of the latest general and special works : L. Renou, J. Filliozat, *L'Inde Classique*, I, *Paris*, 1947, p. 211; H. Raychaudhuri, *Political History . . .*, p. 236; *The Age of the Imperial Unity*, p. 31; R. C. Majumdar, H.C. Raychaudhuri, K.K. Datta, *An Advanced History of India*, vol. I, Calcutta, 1953, p. 63; Nilakanta Sastri, *History of India*, vol. 1, Madras, 1953, p. 52; *Age of the Nandas and Mauryas*, p. 14; M. Bussagli', Indian Events, *loc. cit.*, p. 237; E. Lamotte, *Histoire . . .*, p. 107; S.N. Pradhan, *Chronology of Ancient India*, Calcutta, 1927, p. 228.
42. *Mah.*, V. 17.
43. *Vam.*, I. 181-183.
44. *Mahābodhivaṃsa*, p. 98.
45. At the same time, supporters of the above-mentioned identification point to a certain closeness of the name of Agrammes to a corrupt form of the Sanskrit Augrasainya, son (descendant) of Ugrasena. The *Mahābodhivaṃsa* says that Ugrasena was the first of the Nanda rulers (see H. Raychaudhuri, *Political History . . .*, p. 236). However, the transformation of the Sanskrit Augrasainya into Agrammes is hardly possible. It is significant that the name Augrasainya is almost absent from ancient Indian sources; for example, it has never been recorded in the *Purāṇas* (See V.R. Dikshitar, *The Purāṇa Index*, vol. 1, Madras, 1951).
46. *DKA*, p. 25.
47. *Sarva-kṣatr-āntako*; *kṣatra-vināśa-kṛt* (*DKA*, p. 25).
48. See *DKA*, pp. 24-25; 69, note 15; P.H.L. Eggermont, *The Chronology . . .*, ch. VII. The *Viṣṇu-Purāṇa*, one of the most ancient and authoritative *Purāṇas*, u ed the name Nanda.
49. Mahāpadmapati, for example, means "the owner of great wealth". This is the view of a commentator of the *Viṣṇu-Purāṇa* (see *Viṣṇu-Purāṇa*, ed. by H. Wilson, 1840, IX, p. 184; H. Raychaudhuri, *Political History . . .*, p. 231. Mahādeva, "great deity").
50. *Pariśiṣṭaparvan*, VI. 231.
51. See *Āryamañjuśrīmūlakalpa*, p. 15. As in *Div.*, p. 369.
52. Jaina sources call the first of the Nanda kings Nanda (or Naṃdarāya)—*Vijayarājendra Bhaṭṭāraka*, *Abhidhāna Rājendra*, I-VII, Ratlam, 1913-1925, IV, p. 1750.

Availing myself of this opportunity, I express my gratitude to Prof.

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A.L. Basham, who kindly sent me photostat copies of the necessary fragments of the above-mentioned Jaina encyclopaedia.

53. *Uggasenanandaḥ*; see *Mahābodhivaṃsa*, p. 98. It is interesting that in the *Bhāgavata-Purāṇa* (X. 84.59), Nanda is called Ugrasena (see *Purāṇa Index*, I. 210). See R.R.P. Bigandet, *The Life or Legend of Gaudama*, vol. II, London, 1914; K.P. Jayaswal, 'The Śaiśunāka and Maurya Chronology and the Date of Buddha's Nirvāṇa', *JBORS*, I, 1915, pp. 6, 7-116.
54. *Pariśiṣṭaparvan*, VI. 213. Diodorus (XVII. 93); Curtius Rufus : *patrem eius tonsorem*. A similar tradition survived in later classical sources, however, not with regard to Agrammes but to King Porus, for example, in Photius' extracts from Helladius, a 4th-century Greek grammarian (J. Bekker, *Photii Bibliotheca*, Berlin, 1824, p. 530, a. 35). The same was stated in a speech by *Libanios*, a Greek 4th-century sophist (*Oratio*, LVII, 52). Porus was apparently the most widely known Indian king in the ancient world. His name was a kind of common name for an Indian ruler. This is confirmed by Strabo's account (XV. 1.4) of an embassy to Augustus from the Indian king Porus.
55. See *Abhidhāna Rājendra*, IV. 1750.
56. *DKA*, p. 25.
57. *Vaṃ.* I. 179-180.
58. *DKA*, p. 21.
59. *nīcamukhyasamākhyātas*, "called the head of the low", or "low leader" (see K.P. Jayaswal, *An Imperial History of India*, Lahore, 1933, p. 14).
60. Curtius (IX. 2) and Diodorus (XVII, 93).
61. K.P. Jayaswal, *An Imperial History* . . ., p. 14. Ugrasena literally means "the one who possesses a huge army" and was, apparently, one of the Nanda kings' frequent nick-names which was a reflection of his real power. According to some sources, the first of the Nanda rulers had a huge army (for example, the *Āryamañjuśrīmūlakalpa* characterises King Nanda as *mahāsainyaḥ*, "having a huge army").
62. See *Age of the Nandas and Mauryas*, pp. 14-24; H. Raychaudhuri, *Political History* . . ., pp. 231-236.
63. *Vaṃ.*, I. 179-181.
64. P.H.L. Eggermont, *The Choronology* . . ., pp. 144-163.
65. For more detail, see G.M. Bongard-Levin, 'Agrames-Ugrasena-Nanda i votsareniye Chandragupty [Agrames-Ugrasena-Nanda and the Accession of Candragupta'], — *Vestnik drevnei istorii* [*Bulletin of Ancient History*], No. 4, 1962, pp. 11-12.
66. *DKA*, p. 25.
67. *Vaṃ.* I. 180.
68. *Age of the Nandas and Mauryas*, p. 26.
59. *The Kathāsaritsāgara of Somadevabhaṭṭa*, vol. I, Calcutta, 1880, p. 21.
70. K.A. Nilakanta Sastri, *A History of South India*, Oxford, 1958, p. 79.
71. For more details, see R. Mookerjee, *Chandragupta* . . .
72. *The Pariśiṣṭaparvan* (VII. 230) says that Candragupta was born into the family of a village headman engaged in peacock-raising (*mayūrapoṣaka-grāma*). The connection between the names Maurya and peacock (*mayura*) is mentioned in other sources (*Vaṃ.* I. 180; *Ext. Mah.* V. 95 101).

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According to the *Vaṃ.*, data on the origin of the Mauryas are based on the evidence of the Sinhalese work *Uttaravihāra-aṭṭha-kathā*, dated approximately from the 1st century A.D. *The Mahāparinibbānasūtta* mentions the Mauryas (Moriya) from Pipphalivana, who took part in sharing the remains of the Buddha. Peacock-raising in the age of the Mauryas is attested by art and numismatics. The image of a peacock is reproduced, for example, on an Aśokan pillar from Nandigarh, the Sānchi stūpa, in sculptural scenes from the life of Aśoka (J. Marshall, *A Guide to Sanchi*, Calcutta, 1918, pp. 44, 62) and on punch-marked coins dating from the Mauryan period (see Durga Prasad, 'Classification and Significance of the Symbols on the Silver Punch-marked Coins of Ancient India', *JPrASB*, New Series, vol. 30, No. 3, 1934). A peacock is engraved on a special mould for making seals of the Mauryan period (K.P. Jayaswal, 'Some Unpublished Seals', *JBORS*, vol. 20, pt 1, 1934, pp. 2-3). Aelian speaks of peacock-raising in the parks of the royal court at Pāṭaliputra (XIII. 18).

73. C.D. Chatterji, 'Early Life of Chandragupta Maurya', *B.C. Law Volume*, Calcutta, 1945. According to C.D. Chatterji, the commentator's identification is erroneous.
74. Moreover, the *Purāṇas* report that Kauṭilya (Candragupta's tutor) had destroyed all Nandas, and it was only then that the Mauryas came to power (*DKA*, p. 25).
75. *mithyā-darśī brāhmaṇa eva vṛṣalaśabdena grahītavya iti* (see S. Bose, 'Vṛṣala', *IC*, vol. 2, No. 3, 1936, p. 597). For different interpretations of the term "*vṛṣala*", see A. Ghosh, 'The Caste of Candragupta Maurya', *IHQ*, vol. 6, No. 2, 1930, pp. 271-283; by the same author, 'Vṛṣala', *IC*; vol. 2, No. 4, 1936, pp. 811-813; M. Seth, 'Vṛṣala, The Greek Kingly Title of Candragupta Maurya', *IHQ*, vol. 13, No. 4, 1937, pp. 641-653; Dasharatha Sharma, 'The Ancestry and Caste of Candragupta Maurya according to the Mudrārākṣasa', *The Poona Orientalist*, vol I, Nos. 2-3, 1940, pp. 81-86; M. Govind Pai, 'The Word Vṛṣala in Mudrārākṣasa', *P.K. Gode Commemoration Volume*, Poona, 1960, pp. 141-150.
76. It should be taken into account that the *Mudrārākṣasa* is not a historical source, but a play written several centuries after Candragupta's reign, and it is hardly justifiable to draw conclusions on the basis of its evidence alone.
77. The well-known Buddhist text *Mahāparinibbāṇa-sūtta*, written in Pāli, relates this family to the Kṣatriyas (*Dīg. N.*, II.167). *Vaṃ.* (I. 180) proves the Kṣatriya origin of the Mauryas through their connection with the Śākyas, but this legend appeared in Ceylon only in the 1st cent. A.D. and probably has no historical value (B. Ch. Law, *Kṣatriya Clans in Buddhist India*, Calcutta, 1922, p. 204).
78. H. Seth, 'Did Candragupta Maurya Belong to North-Western India?' *ABORI*, vol. 18, 1957, p. 52.
79. B. Prakash, 'The Home of the Mauryas', *IHQ*, vol. 31, No. 2, 1955, p. 165.
80. See B. Ch. Law, *Rājagṛha*... p. 1. Burmese tradition connects the founding

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of the town of Moriyanagara with the rulers of Vaiśālī. See Bigandet, II, p. 126.

81. Strabo, XV.1.35-36.
82. See *Ext. Mah.*, V. 102-103; *DPPN*, vol. I, p. 673; Rajani Kanta Sen, 'About the Origin of the Mauryas of Magadha and of Cāṇakya', *JPTSI*, vol. 2, pt 3, 1895, p. 27.
83. See also *Ext. Mah.*, V. 72-74.
84. The reading of Nandrum in Justin's text is borne out by evidence in most manuscripts and it is dictated by common sense (A. von Gutschmid, *König Nanda von Magadha in XV. Buche der Historien des Pompejus Trogus*, —in "Kleine Schriften", vol. III, Leipzig, 1892, pp. 568-576). The suggested correction of Nandrum into Alexandrum is objectionable (H. Raychaudhuri, *Political History...*, p. 265; *Age of the Nandas and the Mauryas*, pp. 12-13, 154). In his review of this book, Dr. G. Fussman writes the following about the correction of Nandrum into Alexandrum : "Cette correction repose sur des présupposés que rien ne justifie." It should be pointed out that T. Trautmann accepts the reading Nandrum unreservedly, referring to the publishers of Justin's text; see T. Trautmann, *Kauṭilya and the Arthaśāstra*, pp. 57-58.
85. For more details, see M. Bussagli, 'Indian Events...', *loc. cit.* The question whether classical writers knew the Indian tradition about Candragupta is of particular interest. Neither Megasthenes nor Justin mentions Cāṇakya (Kauṭilya), but there are grounds to believe that Trogus (whom Justin followed) was aware of the Indian tradition about Candragupta and above all, probably, about the *Candragupta-kathā*. According to tradition, Candragupta had no direct rights to the throne, since he did not belong to the ruling family, and he seized power only with Cāṇakya's aid. Trogus also records that Candragupta was not an offspring of the royal family and "was prompted to assume royal power by the will of the Gods", that only a miracle—the appearance of the lion—prompted him to seize the throne. In the *Mudrārākṣasa* (1.5) Cāṇakya (Kauṭilya) compares himself with a lion which threw King Nanda off the throne as if off the top of a mountain.

    We have already mentioned the close similarity between Indian evidence and Justin's story about the clash between Cāṇakya (in Indian sources) or Candragupta (in Justin) and the Nanda king. Apparently, Trogus and Justin linked with Candragupta some information which they had learned from local tradition about Cāṇakya.
86. *Ext. Mah.* and *Vaṃ.* also speak of the financial support given to Candragupta by Cāṇakya.
87. *Pariśiṣṭaparvan*, VIII, 253-254.
88. Tradition confirms not only Plutarch's statement about Candragupta's stay in the Punjab but also his data about the early years of the future Mauryan ruler.
89. Classical writers' data about the relations (and the meeting) between Alexander and the local Indian king survived in mediaeval writings in different Oriental languages. They were probably based on *Pseudo*

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Callisthenes, a novel about Alexander, which has survived in many versions (Greek, Ethiopian, Latin, etc.).

Shah-Nameh by Firdousi, for example, tells of a letter from Iskander (Alexander) to the Indian king, Keid. (In Masudi, Kand; in the Syrian version of *Pseudo-Callisthenes*, Kandaros, which can be a corruption of "Candra"). Versions of *Pseudo-Callisthenes* say that king Kandaros sought Alexander's assistance to defeat his enemy (cf. Plutarch's story). King Keid had a wizard, Mihran, who interpreted dreams for him. Mihran is probably a corruption of "brāhmaṇa" (one of the Prākṛt forms from *brāhmaṇa* is *mahana*). *Ext. Mah.* (V.125-127) tells of young Candragupta's dream and its interpretation by the Brāhmaṇ Cāṇakya. The substance of the dreams in these two sources is similar: they concern seizure of power. If these coincidences are not accidental, it is possible to assume that Firdousi or his predecessors had, apart from classical tradition, some data borrowed from Indian sources. (See Buddha Prakash, 'Candragupta Maurya in the Shah-Nama of Firdausi', *ABORI*, vol. 36, 1955, pp. 270-291; vol. 37, 1956, pp. 120-143; by the same author, 'Chandragupta Maurya in Ethiopic Texts', *Bharatiya Vidya*, vol. 19, Nos 1-2, 1959, pp. 32-34; by the same author, *Studies...*, pp. 20-69; E. Budge, *The Alexander Book in Ethiopia*, London, 1933).

90. Arrian (*Anab.* V.18.7) says that after the battle with Porus, Alexander decided to make peace with him and sent to him Meroi, an Indian and Porus' old friend. Buddha Prakash suggested the possibility of identifying Meroi with the future Mauryan king Candragupta (Buddha Prakash, *Studies...*, pp. 59-60). If this identification is correct, Arrian's information could be compared with Plutarch's statements about Candragupta's meeting with Alexander. In this connection, it is interesting to note that Hesychii (end of the 4th cent. B.C.) speaks of (Morieus) as kings of India (*Euphorio*, fragment CLXVII, *Hesychii Alexandrii Lexicon*, p. 1071).
91. *Vaṃ.*, I.185-186.
92. According to *Vaṃ.* (I.184) and *Ext. Mah.* (V. 123-129), as far back as the time of his struggle against the Nandas, Cāṇakya drew to his side Crown Prince Parvata (Pabbatakumāra). *Pariśiṣṭaparvan* (VIII.291-301) refers to the alliance between Candragupta and King Parvataka.
93. *CHI*, p. 471; S. Seth, 'Identification of Parvataka and Poros', *IHQ*, vol. 17, 1941, pp. 172-179; Buddha Prakash, 'Poros', *ABORI*, vol. 32, 1952, pp. 198-233; by the same author, *History of Poros*, Patiala / s.a. /.
94. Curtius Rufus (VIII. 13.3-4) tells of the Kandahar rebellion; Arrian (*Anab.* V. 20.7) preserved information concerning the rebellion of the Assakenoi. An anti-Macedonian rebellion in the lower Indus area, headed by king Mosikanos, was very persistent (*Anab.* VI.15-17). It was organised on the advice of Brāhmaṇas, and Alexander dealt with them brutally. The Brahmaṇas' anti-Macedonian feelings also found their expression in an open struggle when, according to Arrian (*Anab.* VI.7.4), a town of Brāhmaṇas rebelled.
95. It is significant that a new satrap was never appointed since the Greeks were no longer able to restore their positions in the Punjab.

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96. In the opinion of Diodorus, Eudamus left India and set out to the west to help Eumenes in his campaign against Antigonus (Diodorus, XIX. 14.8). Modern scholars attribute the departure of Eudamus to that reason alone. One should not, however, discount the possibility of an upsurge of anti-Greek movement at that period. Eudamus could obviously no longer maintain his positions and was forced to leave India. It is possible that local Indian kings, and Porus in particular, set out against Eudamus.
97. One should specially take this point into account when studying Candragupta's struggle for the throne. Not only Eudamus' military garrisons but also the fairly strong rule of local Indian kings seriously impeded Candragupta in his attempt to capture the Punjab provinces. Particularly powerful was the state of Porus, who, after most of Alexander's forces had departed, became the most powerful ruler of the whole of West and North-West India. It is significant that Megasthenes, who came to India after Seleucus had made peace with Candragupta, said that the Mauryan king was even more powerful than Porus (*Ind.*, V. 3). A character from the *Mudrārākṣasa* (V.7) speaks of Parvata as a king more powerful than Candragupta.
98. *Dve api rājye tasya jate.*
99. It is noteworthy that after the new division of the satrapies the Punjab provinces were no longer mentioned.
100. Many researchers held the view that Candragupta first seized the Magadhan throne and then started war against the Greeks (H. Raychaudhuri, *Political History...*).
101. For example, *Age of the Nandas and Mauryas*, p. 145.
102. Candragupta apparently should have had the backing of those non-monarchical confederacies which Alexander, after his victories in the Punjab, gave to the Indian king Porus to rule. According to Plutarch's statement (LXII), Alexander "not only permitted him (Porus) to rule those (peoples) over whom he had previously reigned and granted him the title of satrap, but he also subjugated some independent peoples and added (their) territories to his".
103. N.K. Bhattasali, 'Maurya Chronology and Connected Problems', *JRAS*, 1932, pp. 276-284; *A Comprehensive History...*, vol. 2, pp. 4-5.
104. For more details, see G.M. Bongard-Levin, 'Agrames..., *loc. cit.*
105. With the exception of one vague statement about the struggle against the barbarian Mlecchas in the *Mudrārākṣasa.*
106. The *Milindapañho*, p. 292. According to *Ext. Mah.* (V. 151), King Dhana Nanda fell in the battle with Candragupta. In Mahādeva's commentaries on the *Mudrārākṣasa*, the latter only managed to capture Pāṭaliputra, thanks to the treachery of King Nanda's generals. According to the *Pariśiṣṭaparvan* (V. 301-317), Candragupta and Cāṇakya spared the life of the last of the Nandas and let him leave the capital. For more details, see W. Ruben, *Der Sinn des Dramas "Das Siegel und Rakshasa (Mudrārākṣasa)"*, Berlin, 1956, pp. 153-176.
107. B.A. Saletore, *India's Diplomatic Relations...*; W.W. Tarn, *The Greeks...*; B. Ch. Chhabra, 'War between Seleucus and Candragupta in the

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Rāmāyaṇa', *Woolner Commemoration Volume*, Lahore, 1940. See also F.F. Schwarz, 'Mauryas und Seleukiden. Probleme ihrer gegenseitigen Beziehungen', *Studien zur Sprachwissenschaft und Kulturkunde*, Insbruck, 1968, pp. 223-230.

108. "The borders of his kingdom in Asia became the greatest after Alexander's" (Appian, XI.9.55); see also Strabo (XV.2.9).
109. For example, R.C. Majumdar, *Ancient India*, Benares, 1952, p. 108.
110. The question of Candragupta's territorial gains has been sharply discussed in various publications (see, for example, V. Smith, *The Early History...*, pp. 159-160; W.W. Tarn, *The Greeks...*, p. 100). According to Pliny (VI.20.23), India consisted of four satrapies—Gedrosia, Arachosia, Aria and Paropamisadai. It is interesting that Megasthenes regarded the Indus as the western border of India (*Ind.*, II.5). This somewhat strange statement by the Seleucid Ambassador sent to India after the conclusion of the treaty is probably due to the fact that the treaty had not yet reflected the changes in the western borders. The Indus is known to have been the border between Seleucus and Candragupta before the "conflict" (see Appian, *Sirica*, XI.9.55).
111. W.W. Tarn erroneously believed Paropamisadai to be outside Candragupta's empire (W.W. Tarn, *The Greeks...*, p. 100).
112. Some scholars tended to regard Appian's statement as a reference to the actual marriage of Seleucus' daughter to Candragupta (for more detail, see D.C. Sircar, 'Indological Notes', *Journal of Ancient Indian History*, vol. I, pts, 1-2, 1967-1968, pp. 87-90). This was also the view of W.W. Tarn (*The Greeks...*, p. 174, No. 3). Strabo uses the term epigamia which was interpreted by a number of scholars also as permission for Greeks to marry Indians.
113. According to Pliny (VI.21-22), the king of the Prasii (that is, Candragupta) had nine thousand war-elephants, and Solinus (52) eight thousand.
114. See A.B. Ranovitch, *Ellinism i ego istoricheskaya rol* [*Hellinism and Its Historical Role*], Moscow-Leningrad, 1950, p. 92.
115. It is known, for example, that Patrocles, who was the ruler of the eastern provinces under Seleucus Nicator, was seeking means to receive goods from India. Strabo (II.1.2) highly valued Patrocles' knowledge of geography and considered his information reliable (II.1.10).
116. See, for example, *A Comprehensive History...*, vol. 2, p. 10.
117. Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, I, 18d. The name given by Athenaeus is closer to the Indian original than forms mentioned by other classical writers.
118. The inscription of the 2nd century A.D. from Junāgarh tells of the construction of a dam during the reign of Candragupta (*E.I.*, vol. 8, p. 42). It is possible to refer to evidence about Candragupta's relations with the followers of different religious teachings. Apart from Hemacandra's statement about the king's support for heretical teachings, the *Pariśiṣṭaparvan* tells of the conversion of Candragupta to Jainism (VIII.415-435). According to this source, the king died a Jaina saint (VIII.445). Commentaries on the *Theragāthā* (I, p. 440) say that

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Candragupta, incited by Cāṇakya, issued an order to imprison the father of one of the Buddhist leaders of the community (*DPPN*, vol. I, p. 846). On the basis of the evidence of this late Buddhist source, it would be difficult to contend that Candragupta had pursued an anti-Buddhist policy. Apparently it was a reflection of the Buddhists' attitude to the king's pro-Jaina policy. The mediaeval *Rājāvalīkathe* tells of the last years of Candragupta's life. The king was a Jaina and when a famine broke out in Pāṭaliputra, he allegedly abdicated in favour of his son, and went to South India, where he died. (H. Raychaudhuri, *Political History...*, pp. 294-295). It is interesting that two 9th-century South Indian inscriptions mention Candragupta, as a Jaina saint, and Bhadrabāhu, one of the famous Jaina monks to whom tradition attributes the authorship of the *Kalpa-sūtra* (See L. Rice, *Mysore and Coorg from Inscriptions*, Mysore, 1909, pp. 3-4).

119. See *Dīp.*, VI.15. It is interesting that Buddhaghoṣa also dates the death of Ceylon king, Pandukābhaya, from the fourteenth year of Candragupta's reign.
120. Aelian, *Nat. Anim.*, XIII.18.
121. See, for example, Burmese tradition about Candragupta (Bigandet, II.12).
122. Ch. Lassen, *Indische Altertumskunde*, II, p. 222.
123. *Div.*, pp. 372-373; *Istoriya buddisma v Indii* [*A History of Buddhism*], p. 29.
124. Ibid., p. 29.
125. For example, A. Gawronski, 'Bindusāra Maurya', *RO*, 1925, pp. 21-25.
126. *Div.*, p. 370.
127. *Vaṃ.*, I.190, 192-193, and also *Ext. Mah.*, V. 216.
128. *Mah.*, V. 34; *Sam.*, I, 44.
129. Some sources interpret this name as *A-śoka* ("without sorrow"). See *Sum.* II.613-614; S. Mitra, 'Identity of Piyadasi and Aśoka', *IC*, vol. I, 1934, pp. 120-121.
130. *Piyadāso nāma kumāro chattam ussāpetvā Asoko nāma Dhammarāja hutvā* (*Sum.* II.613).
131. See E. Benveniste, *Edicts d'Aśoka...*; M.C. Joshi, J.C. Joshi, 'A Study of the Names of Aśoka', *JOIB*, vol. 12, No. 4, 1968, pp. 415-421.
132. D. Sharma, 'Devānāṃpiya', *IHQ*, vol. 26, No. 2, 1950, pp. 149-151.
133. *Mah.*, XIII, 8; *Dīp.*, V.39; *Sam.*, I.45. The *Mahābodhivaṃsa* calls Aśoka the ruler of Avanti and king of Ujjayinī (*Ujjenirāja*). The *Ext. Mah.*, (V.250-252) says that he was appointed ruler of the Avanti province (*Avantiratthaṃ tesaṃ pi uparājjam adasi so*). *Vaṃ.* (I.198) reports that Aśoka received as a gift from Bindusāra the kingdom of Avanti, and this accounts for his stay at Ujjayinī.
134. *Div.*, pp. 371-372; J. Przyluski, *La Légende...*, p. 232; S.N. Mitra, *Sanscrit Buddhist Literature...*, p. 9.
135. *Istoriya buddisma* [*A History of Buddhism*], p. 29.
136. *Div.*, p. 372. Southern Pāli chronicles have also preserved evidence about his struggle for power against his brothers. The *Ext. Mah.* (V.262) tells of the murder of 99 brothers; The *Mahābodhivaṃsa* (p. 98) calls Sumana

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yuvarāja ("heir to the throne"), who together with the rest of the brothers challenged Aśoka.

137. P.H.L. Eggermont, *The Chronology...*, pp. 86, 180. R. Thapar is against this conclusion and defends the traditional point of view (R. Thapar, *Aśoka...*, pp. 15, 39).
138. We have considered this question in detail in our article 'Kalingskaya voina i yeyo znacheniye v istorii pravleniya Ashoki' ['The Kalinga War and Its Role in the History of Aśoka's Reign'], *Vestnik drevnei istorii* [*Bulletin of Ancient History*], No. 3. 1958.
139. R.C. Majumdar, H.C. Raychaudhuri, K.K. Datta, *Advanced History...*, p. 107.
140. H. Raychaudhuri, *Political History...*, p. 307.
141. J. Macphail, *Aśoka*, Calcutta, 1926, p. 41. This is also the view of the authors of the *Cambridge History of India*,—CHI, I, p. 495.
142. B.Ch. Law, *Magadhas...*, pp. 16-17.
143. G. Dunbar, *A History of India*, London, 1936, p. 48.
144. *CII*. I, p. XLI.
145. P.H.L. Eggermont, *The Chronology...*, pp. 68-72.
146. For more details, see section on *Dharma and Dharmavijaya.*
147. For more details, see *Age of the Nandas and Mauryas*, p. 249.
148. For more details, see E. Frauwallner, *The Earliest Vinaya...*, pp. 13-23.
149. A.L. Basham, 'Mauryan Chronology', in *Studies...*, *loc cit.*, P.H.L. Eggermont, *The Chronology...*, *loc. cit.*
150. See *IHQ*, vol. 5, 1929, pp. 6-14; *JASB*, vol. 9, p. 317; *JBORS*, vol. I, 1915, p. 67; *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, Delhi, 1930, pp. 317-376; *JIH*, vol. 19, 1940, pp. 17-21.
151. See *Age of the Nandas and Mauryas*, p. 137; *IHQ*, vol. 11, No. 2, 1935, pp. 211-222; E. Lamotte, *Histoire...*, p. 236.
152. See *CHI*, p. 471; *Ind. Ant.*, vol. 49, 1920, p. 49. R. Thapar, *Aśoka...*, p. 16).
153. See *JRAS*, 1906, p. 948; B.A. Saletore, *India's Diplomatic Relations...*, p. 130.
154. *AO*, 1929, vol. I, pp. 354-371.
155. P.H.L. Eggermont, *The Chronology...*, p. 180.
156. *CHI*, pp. 156, 164; P. Lal Bhargava, *Candragupta Maurya*, Lucknow, 1935, p. 8; *JRAS*, 1932, p. 279; *L'Inde classique*, p. 213.
157. *DKA*, p. 25.
158. See *Pariśiṣṭaparvan*, VIII, 339; Bhau Daji, 'Merutuṅga's Therāvalī or Genealogical and Succession Tables', *J. Bom. BRAS*, vol. 9, 1867, pp. 147-157. Sh. Shah, *The Traditional Chronology of the Jainas*, Stuttgart, 1933.
159. For more details, see P.H.L. Eggermont, *The Chronology . . . .*
160. *Ext. Mah.* (V. 262-265) says that Aśoka murdered his brothers and seized power 218 years after the Buddha's *Nirvāṇa*. It is then noted that four years after he had become an autocratic ruler, the coronation took place in Pāṭaliputra (*patvā catūhivassehi ekarājjam mahāyaso*). This is also confirmed by *Mah.* (V. 22). The *Vaṃ.* (I. 194) explains the four-year

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interval as the "attainment of autocracy" (*ekarājjam*).

161. J. Fleet, 'The Origin of the Buddhavarsha, the Ceylonese Reckoning from the Death of the Buddha', *JRAS*, 1909, pp. 213-256; A. Bareau, 'La date du Nirvāṇa', *JA*, 1953, CCXLI, pp. 27-62.
162. M.G. Pai, 'Date of Buddha's Parinirvāṇa', *JOIB*, vol. I, No. 4, 1952, pp. 317-328. The date 487-486 B.C. has been accepted by R. Thapar, P.H.L. Eggermont, and R.K. Mookerji.
163. See, for example P.H.L. Eggermont, 'The Date of Aśoka's Rock Edict XIII,' *AcO*, vol. 18, pt. II, 1940, pp. 103-123.
164. See R. Fazy, 'Note. . .,', *loc. cit.*, pp. 135-136; Sidersky, 'Une eclipse . . .,' *loc. cit.*, pp. 295-297.
165. For more detail, see G.M. Bongard-Levin, 'Agrames . . ., *loc. cit.*
166. P.H.L. Eggermont, 'New Notes on Aśoka and his Successors,' *Persica*, vol. 2, 1965-1966, pp. 27-45.
167. See J. Przyluski, *La Légende . . .* The *Aśokāvadāna* was a completely independent composition and only much later was included in the general collection of Buddhist *Avadānas* (see S. Levi, *Les éléments de farmation du Divyāvadāna*. "Jong Pao," vol. XIII, 1905, pp 105-122.
168. See J. Przuluski, *La Légende . . .*,
169. *Sūtrālaṃkāra, traduit en francais sur la version chinoise de Kumārajīva*, par E. Huber, Paris, 1908.
170. See H. Lüders, *Brüchstücke der Kalpanāmaṇḍitika des Kumāralāta*, Leipzig, 1926.
171. *Saṃyukta Āgama*. ch. 25; Tokyo edition of Tripiṭaka. Quoted from U.N. Ghoshal, *Studies in Indian History and Culture*, Calcutta, 1957, pp. 424-426.
172. S. Beal, *Buddhist Records of the Western World*, vol. II, London, 1883.
173. See *Avadānakalpalatā with its Tibetan version*, ed. by Sarat Chandra Das and Pandit Hari Mohan Vidyābhuṣaṇa, reprint edition, Calcutta, 1940 (Bibliotheca Indica), pp. 595-597.
174. *Istoriya buddisma* [*A History of Buddhism*]; A Schiefner, *Tāranātha's Geschichte der Buddismus*, St. Pt., 1869.
175. Unfortunately, the Pāli chronicles of Ceylon, the *Dīpavaṃsa* and the *Mahāvaṃsa*, which contained data about the life and activities of Emperor Aśoka, provide no evidence of his removal from power, although there are some facts about the last years of his rule which in many respects resemble the North Indian tradition : for example, accounts of Queen Tissarakkitā, of her destruction of the Buddha tree, etc. (see *Mah.* XX. 3-6). In comparing the North Indian and Southern (Ceylonese) legends about Aśoka, preference should be given to the former as the earlier one and also because it was territorially connected with the Mauryan Empire. The Ceylonese chronicles were compiled in the 4th-5th cent. A.D., while the Sanskrit text of the *Aśokāvadāna* appeared much earlier. This is confirmed by the existence of Chinese translations made in the late 3rd-early 4th cent. (see S. Lévi, *Les éléments . . .*). A number of legends about Aśoka preserved in the Nepalese manuscript of the *Aśokāvadāna* have also

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been found in the Chinese version of the *Sūtrālaṃkāra* (the translation was made by Kumārajiva in 405 A.D.).

The authorship of the *Sūtrālaṃkāra* is usually ascribed to Aśvaghoṣa who, according to tradition, lived during the rule of Kaniṣka (S. Lévi, 'Aśvaghoṣa, Le Sūtrālaṃkāra et les sources', *JA*, t. 12, 1908, pp. 57-184). If this tradition were to be followed, the Sanskrit version of the *Sūtrālaṃkāra* could be dated approximately from the 2nd cent. A.D., while the original text of the *Aśokāvadāna*, from which the author of the *Sūtrālaṃkāra* apparently borrowed some stories, would belong to a still earlier date. Unfortunately, the original text of the *Aśokāvadāna* compiled according to Przyluski about a century before Kaniṣka's rule by a Mathura monk has not survived (J. Przyluski, *La Légende . . .*). Eggermont believes that the source should be dated by the 1st cent. P.H.L. Eggermont, *The Chronology . . .*, p. 180). The text of the *Aśokāvadāna*, as it is known now, on the whole, probably corresponds to the original text, but it has undergone repeated revisions, probably even after the final drafting of the *Sūtrālaṃkāra*. Since the Sanskrit fragments of the *Kalpanāmaṇḍitikā* are almost identical with the text of the manuscript of the *Aśokāvadāna* which has survived, there are grounds to believe that the *Kalpanāmaṇḍitikā* is the version closest to the original.

176. In the *Sūtrālaṃkāra* : "But his ministers no longer wanted to give him (objects of great value), (*Sūtrālaṃkāra*, p. 138). In the Chinese version of the *Aśokavadāna* : "After that Sampadi (Eul-mot-t'i) with the ministers' consent, took advantage of the king's illness to take back everything that the king had sent (to the community)" (See J. Przyluski, *La Légende . . .*, p. 298). In the *Saṃyukta-Āgama* : "Then the Crown Prince (*San-po-ti*) immediately ordered that objects of great value should not be issued to meet the needs of the Great King" (U.N. Ghoshal, *Studies . . .*, p. 425). Hsüan Tsang : The ministers (minister) who exercised administration "did not want to implement his wishes" (S. Beal, *Buddhist Records . . .*, vol. II, p. 95). In Kṣemendra : "His grandson by the name of Sampadi, who had lost his head from greed, through the treasury-keepers, withdrew the order of Aśoka who made religious benefactions" (*Avadānakalpalatā*, 74.8).
177. *Kaḥ sāmpratiṃ pṛthivyāṃ īśvaraḥ*, *Div.*, p. 430.
178. *Div.*, p. 430.
179. See J. Przyluski, *La Légende . . .*, pp. 298-299; *Sūtrālaṃkāra*, pp. 139-140.
180. *Div.*, p. 432.
181. J. Przyluski, *La Légende . . .*, p. 299.
182. S. Beal, *Buddhist Records . . .*, vol. II, p. 96.
183. Ibid.
184. *Istoriya buddisma* [*A History of Buddhism*], p. 40.
185. R. Thapar, *Aśoka . . .*, p. 54.
186. That is how B.M. Barua interprets the evidence of the *Divyāvadāna* (B.M. Barua, *Aśoka . . .*). Buddhist chroniclers tried to stress particularly the significance of benefactions and gifts to the Buddhist community. The mighty emperor Aśoka would sacrifice everything for the sake of the *saṅgha* (*Div.*, p. 429).

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187. The *Divyāvadāna* tells of a menacing rebellion which broke out in Taxila shortly before Aśoka's death (*Div.*, p. 407).
188. According to Buddhist tradition, upon learning that a *nirgrantha* from Puṇḍravardhana had desecrated statues of the Buddha, the emperor ordered all *Ājīvikas* in that province to be killed. When the same act was performed by a *nirgrantha* from Pāṭaliputra Aśoka demanded a tax from the heads of each association of *nirgranthas* (by nirgranthas, Jainas were usually understood). In Aśoka's inscriptions, the *Ājīvikas* and Jainas are clearly distinguished, but in the first fragment of the *Divyāvadāna* these terms are apparently used as synonyms. A.L. Basham tends to regard these statements of Buddhist tradition as absolutely incorrect, but may refer to the last years of Aśoka's rule, when he himself began to depart from his policy of religious tolerance (A.L. Basham, *History and Doctrines of Ājīvikas*, London, 1951, p. 148).
189. See, for example, the *Pariśiṣṭaparvan*, IX, 54.
190. This view was first expressed by Fleet, who thought that the southern versions of the Minor Rock Edict of Aśoka are connected with the emperor's stay at Suvarṇagiri (he placed it erroneously in Magadha) after his abdication (see *JRAS*, 1909, p. 304). This conclusion was also supported by R. Dikshitar, who believed that Aśoka had abdicated and spent the rest of his days in penance and prayer (see R. Dikshitar, *The Mauryan Polity*, p. 90).
121. For more details, see G.M. Bongard-Levin, O.F. Volkova, *Legenda o Kuṇāle* [*The Legend about Kuṇāla*].
192. *Devānaṃpiyaṣā vacanenā savvata mahamatā vataviyā, e hetā dutiyāye devīye dāne aṃvāvaḍika vā ālame va dānalgalhe vā é vā pī amne kī chi ganīyati tāye deviye ṣe nāni* [*he*] *vaṃ* [*yi*] *na* [*yana*] *dutīyāye deviye ti tīvalamātu kāluvākiye.* The edict was first published and translated by J. Prinsep as far back as 1837, after which it has been repeatedly reprinted and analysed. Some of the latest publications and translations are : J. Bloch, *Les inscriptions d' Aśoka*, p. 159; A. Sen, *Aśoka . . .*, pp. 136-139; R. Basak, *Aśokan Inscriptions*, pp. 151-152; C.D. Chatterjee, 'Studies in the Inscriptions of Aśoka, Queen's Edict Reconsidered,' *ABORI*, vol. 33, 1953, pp. 57-82; vol. 34, 1954, pp. 30-50, vol. 37, 1957, pp. 208-233.
193. The verbal form is missing here and a word-for-word translation is as follows : "which here Second Queen's gifts".
194. It is possible to read *Vinayana* as "injunction, instruction". Such a reconstruction compares well with the rest of the available data and agrees with *hevaṃ*. The only objection may perhaps arise in connection with the theory advanced by some scholars about the trisyllabic nature of the word. Let us recall, however, that many prominent epigraphists regarded the words as a quadrusyllable, and D.C. Sircar even proposed a reading of the word as *ganayetha* (*SI*, p. 69). Hultzsch was not alone in linking *v* at the beginning of the word with a vowel; even Prinsep read it as *va* (see *CII*, p. 186). Some researchers proposed to restore the third syllable as *ya*, which also confirms our reading and interpretation. On the whole, it seems to us that in this part of the edict one should see

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not a verbal form but a noun (cf. *vinati* in Hultzsch). This is shown by T. Bloch's translation : cela est... de la seconde rein (linked with *hevaṃ*). Chatterjee demonstrated that the reading *hevaṃ* (and not *savaṃ*, as in Senart and Barua) was the correct one. Opposing the interpretation offered by Hultzsch, he stressed the possibility, apart from a number of phonetic difficulties, of connecting the king's order to the mahāmātras with a request to register the gifts of his wife Kāruvākī (C.D. Chatterjee, 'Studies..., *loc. cit.*, p. 41). If the reading we offer (*vinayana*) is accepted, the difficulty is removed.

195. In the text, the word *kāluvākiye* can be either in the genitive or the dative, but, judging from the contents, the construction with the genitive should be accepted (A. Woolner, *ATG*, II, p. 80) –of Kāruvākī. However, such an interpretation does not correspond to the sense of the edict as a whole (*CII*, pp. 159-160).
196. *CII*, p. 158.
197. S. Mitra, 'The Queen's Donation Edict', *IHQ*, vol. 7. 1931, p. 136.
198. A. Sen, *Aśoka*..., p. 136.
199. C.D. Chatterjee, 'Studies...', *loc. cit.*
200. See *CII*, p. 7; *CII*, p. 38, and table XXII; R. Thapar, *Aśoka*..., p. 30; P.H.L. Eggermont. *The Chronology*..., pp. 187-188; H. Seth, 'Chronology' *loc. cit.*, pp. 279-292.
201. See V. Smith, *Aśoka*, p. 220.
202. See, for example, D.R. Bhandarkar, *Aśoka*, Calcutta, 1955.
203. *CII*, p. 177.
204. See M.A. Mehendale, 'North-Western (and Western) Influence on the Versions of Aśoka's Minor Rock Edict', *BDCRI*, vol. 17, 1955-1965, pp. 81-97.
205. According to R. Thapar, the absence of edicts in the last years of Aśoka's rule is a very strange and poorly explained fact (R. Thapar, *Aśoka*..., p. 51).
206. *Pariśiṣṭaparvan*, IX, 34.
207. R. Thapar, *Aśoka*..., p. 53.
208. See J. Przyluski, *La Légende*..., pp. 106-108.
209. This view was defended by Thomas (*CHI*, pp. 512) and R. Thapar *Aśoka*..., p. 194).
210. P.H.L. Eggermont, 'New Notes...', *loc. cit.*, pp. 58-66.
211. Buddha Prakash regards Sampadi and Daśaratha as brother. In his view Daśaratha ruled after Sampadi (B. Prakash, *Studies*..., p. 147).
212. Some scholars assert that Suyaśas and Kuṇāla are one and the same person (*A Comprehensive History*..., p. 43; B. Prakash, *Studies*..., p. 147).
213. It is significant that Jaina sources, close the history of the Mauryas with the rule of Sampadi.
214. V. Smith, *The Early History*..., p. 201.
215. *Rājataraṅginī*, I.115-117.
216. *The Age of Imperial Unity*, p. 90.
217. A.K. Narain, *The Indo-Greeks*, Oxford, 1957, p. 9.
218. Appian uses the term Philia in his description of the alliance between

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Candraupta and Seleucus. In Justin, *paction*.

219. W.W. Tarn, *The Greeks* . . . , pp. 130, 154.
220. P.H.L. Eggermont, 'New Notes . . . .' *loc. cit.*, pp. 58-66.
221. A. Narain, *The Indo-Greeks*, p. 9.
222. *DKA*, pp. 30-31; H.R. Prasad, 'The Family Name of Puṣyamitra,' *JBRS*, vol. 41, pt 1, 1955, pp. 132-137.
223. H. Raychaudhuri, *Political History* . . . , p. 348.
224. See H. Sastri, 'Causes of the Dismemberment of the Maurya Empire,' *JASB*, vol, 4 (New Series), 1910, pp. 259-262.
    Arguments of H. Sastri are examined in detail by H. Raychaudhuri (*Political History* . . . , pp. 354-366); R. Thapar, *Aśoka* . . . , pp. 197-203).
225. D.R. Mankad, *Yugapurāṇam*, Vallabhvidyanagar, 1951, p. 32.
226. R. Thapar, *Aśoka* . . . , p. 197.

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CHAPTER III

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MAURYAN PERIOD

1. Indian Economy in the Latter Half of the First Millennium B.C.

THIS PERIOD investigated is a very significant one, in the history of ancient India. It was marked by the spread of iron, the development of agriculture, crafts and trade, the growth of towns, etc. The foundation of the Mauryan Empire, which united the diverse areas of the vast subcontinent into one state, was extremely important for the development of the country's economy, which was also promoted by the expanding commercial and cultural contacts with neighbouring countries.[1]

Interest in economic problems grew quite perceptibly in this period. This is reflected in numerous sources which pay particular attention to economic activity in ancient India: the *Arthaśāstra*, the epics, late *śāstras* and even Buddhist and Jaina religious texts. A curious report is found, for example, in the *Dīgha-Nikāya* (1.135-136): a Brahman advises the king to refrain from making costly offerings (*yajña*) and to give grain to those tilling the land and raising cattle, supply those engaged in trade with the necessary means, and pay the state officials.

Kauṭilya names the science of economy (*vārttā*) among the four basic sciences, comprising the teaching of agriculture, cattle-raising and trade (1.4). This science, the *Arthaśāstra* says, promotes a high yield of grain, cattle, money, forest produce and labour. It helps the king win over his supporters and subjugate enemies. Kauṭilya stresses that the foundation of this world lies in *vārttā*; all goes well if the king promotes *vārttā*.

The climatic peculiarities of various parts of the country—the foothills of the Himalayas, the fertile valleys of the Ganges,

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the Deccan plateau and the plains of Sind and Rajputana—determined varied economic specialisations and uneven rates of economic growth in these areas. Civilisation sprang up earlier and developed faster in the Ganges Valley than, say, in the mountain areas of the Deccan. The fertile alluvial soil, abundant rainfall and considerable mineral deposits were the factors that determined its faster development.[2] It is, however, very difficult to relate the evidence of the sources to any specific part of India or to apply particular information to the whole of its territory. Whilst, Pāṇini primarily used facts referring to the north-western regions, Megasthenes described mainly the eastern parts, above all Magadha. For this reason, the following outline of the economic situation in ancient India is in many cases sketchy and fragmentary.

R. S. Sharma, distinguishes several stages in the economic development of ancient Indian society.[3] In particular, he singles out the following periods in the latter half of the first millennium B.C. : "Iron and Towns" (600-322 B.C.), "State Control" (322-200 B.C.), and the last period embracing the first centuries of the Christian era—"Grants, Monetary Economy, Roman Trade" (200 B.C.—200 A.D.). It is also possible to trace a definite economic policy pursued by the kings who ruled in the period under investigation, although the available data are somewhat fragmentary.[4]

A major event in the country's economic life was the spread of iron and the use of iron tools in agriculture and crafts. This heralded the arrival of a new stage in technological progress and promoted rapid growth in every branch of economy and industry.

The Indians knew iron very early on : small quantities of it are found in excavations of the layers of the Painted Grey Ware culture (North India) dated from the 12th-11th century B.C.[5] In this connection, R.M. Wheeler's view that iron appeared there in the 6th century B.C., together with the Achaemenids,[6] has been proved to be wrong by the recently available data, even though its use on a wide scale dates to the 6th-3rd centuries B.C.[7]

During the excavations in Ujjain (Ujjayinī) archaeologists found a forging furnace,[8] which is a clear evidence of the development of iron-working. J. Marshall's excavations in Taxila have given a clearer idea of the scope of its use.[9] In the Mauryan

period, copper and bronze were already used to a much smaller extent and served only for making personal ornaments and household utensils. Iron had become the chief metal for making weapons, agricultural implements, craftsmen's tools and household utensils. At Taxila, as in some other settlements, iron arrowheads, axes, adzes, chisels, hoes, anvils, etc. have been found. Records of the wide use of iron in the middle of the first millennium B.C. have been also preserved by classical writers. Herodotus (VII. 65), for example, mentions the iron arrowheads used by the Indians in the battle with Xerxes. Ctesias writes about the two steel swords of Indian origin given to Artaxerxes Mnemon.

Curtius Rufus (IX.24) mentions that after Alexander had defeated the king of Taxila (*c.* 326 B.C.), he received a fair quantity of steel from Porus. Evidently, Indian steel was considered to be highly valuable, for Alexander regarded it as a very rich gift. Among the gifts brought by the Mālavas, there were 100 talents of "white iron" (*ferrum candidum*), which many researchers believe to have been steel (A. Cunningham believed that in the text nickel was implied).[10] According to R.S. Sharma, there are sufficient reasons to think that, in the period in question, India was already exporting articles made of iron and steel.[11]

In the texts of the Pāli Canon, there are numerous references to the use of iron ploughshares. One such reference is found in the *Suttanipāta*, a text dating approximately from the 4th-3rd centuries B.C. It mentions a Brāhmaṇa from Magadha who tilled land with a ploughshare which was apparently made of iron : after a day's work it had become hot and was quickly dipped in water.[12] Pāṇini also writes about the production of iron ploughshares (IV. 1.42). The use of iron enabled new areas to be developed; in particular, the densely wooded tracts of land along the Ganges. Sources contain numerous references to deforestation carried out in order to expand arable land.

Iron gradually spread southwards from North India. No more than two decades ago, most archaeologists dated the appearance of iron in the south from the 3rd century B.C., linking it with the so called Megalithic culture. R.M. Wheeler believed it to have come there along with the expansion of the Mauryas.[13] Recent studies by Indian archaeologists have shown, however, that iron was known in the South much earlier (according to

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N. Banerjee, in the 8th-7th centuries B.C., and according to the American archaeologist, W. Fairservis, in the 11th-10th centuries B.C.[14]), but in the Mauryan age it became widespread.[15]

In the period in question, the transition to agriculture was completed in India, and it became the population's basic economic activity.[16] Agricultural settlements arose along the rivers and in the river valleys. The fertile soil and artificial irrigation enabled the Indians to collect two, and sometimes more, harvests a year. This is witnessed both by classical and Indian sources. "Megasthenes indicates the fertility of India", Strabo writes, "by the fact of the soil producing two crops every year both of fruits and grain. Eratosthenes writes to the same effect."[17] Pāṇini speaks of the spring (*Vāsantaka*) and autumn (*āśvayujaka*) crops.[18]

Buddhist texts contain fairly lengthy descriptions of many kinds of farm work and give more details of the various processes as compared with the Brāhmaṇic texts, which indicates a further development of agriculture.[19] Even Pāṇini's grammatical work has preserved special terms for ploughing, sowing, weeding, harvesting, threshing and winnowing of corn and for various categories of land – arable (*halya*), pasture (*gocara*) and waste land (*ūṣara*).[20] The term *kedāra*, which occur in Pāṇini and Patañjali, was applied to irrigated land.

Ancient Indians knew a great deal about soils. In the Pāli Canon the land of Magadha is specially marked as very fertile and suitable for agriculture.[21] Soils were also grouped according to their suitability for various crops (for example, for rice, sesame and barley).[22]

The principal crops were various kinds of rice, barley, millet and wheat. Megasthenes wrote that Indian food is principally a rice-pottage (Strabo, XV. 1.53). Theophrastus, whose data on India pertain to the period following Alexander's campaign, noted in his work *On the History of Plants* that "for the most part they sow the so-called rice which they also cook."[23]

Patañjali's commentaries report that barley was grown in West India – Uśīnara and Madra (*Uśīnaravanmadreṣu yavaḥ*), and rice in Magadha (*tān eva śālin bhuñjāmahe ye magadheṣu*).[24] It is noteworthy that both the *Jātakas* and the *Mahāvagga* (VIII. 12.1) mention large rice-fields in the Magadha area. The *Jātakas* list various varieties of rice : red (*rāgaśāli*,[25] *lohitaśāli* in Patañjali),

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taṇḍula, *cīnaka* and *nīvāra*.[26] Similar data are also contained in the *Majjhima-Nikāya* (III. 90), which also mentions sesame (*tila*), leguminous plants (*mugga*), etc. In droughty areas, where no rice could be grown (for instance, the Deccan plateau), the chief crop was millet. Besides the above crops, certain texts mention sugarcane, fruits and vegetables.[27]

Archaeological data enable us to verify the written records and establish the spread of various crops in the three main climatic zones of India : the western or the Indus basin zone; the southern or the peninsular (except for the extreme south); and the northern, or the Ganges Valley zone. In the first zone, the main crops were barley and wheat. Wheat grains were found here even from the period of the Harappa culture. Leguminous crops, sesame and fruits were also grown. In the second zone, wheat was grown (the earliest finds were in the calcolithic layers of Navda-Toli, 1800-1200 B.C.) as well as rice (in the layer of the 16th century B.C.),[28] millet, leguminous plants and fruits. In the northern zone, rice is the only grain crop to have been found during excavations; no remains of any other crops have been found so far.[29]

The evidence preserved gives us an idea of the farming technology of that period. The chief farming implement was the plough, usually drawn by oxen.[30] Pāṇini used the term *halya* for a field tilled by a plough (IV.4.97). He also mentioned a double and triple ploughing of land. The latter is also confirmed by the *Arthaśāstra* (II.24). To make the ploughing deeper, several oxen were harnessed (sometimes as many as 24). The plough symbolised prosperity. Kātyāyana's phrase is indicative in this respect : "Be happy with your plough" (*svasti bhavate sahahalāya*).[31] Theft or damage of a plough was punished severely. Sickles (*dātra*, *lavitra*), hoes (*stambaghna*) and spades (*khanitra*, *ākhana*)[32] were also used in farming. These tools have been excavated in multilayer settlements dated to the 6th-1st centuries B.C.

Evidence of agricultural development in the Mauryan epoch is provided by Megasthenes, according to whom farmers made up a special category of the population. Diodorus writes that this class comprised "far more (members) than others" (II.40). Kauṭilya devotes several chapters of his treatise to this problem. To judge by the *Arthaśāstra*, the state paid much attention to agriculture and helped the peasants to develop waste lands. The Mauryas made important progress in developing agriculture by

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setting up new villages and settling residents of populated areas on deserted lands.

The climatic conditions in India -- the uneven rainfall over her territory, the violent overflows of the rivers in the period of monsoons and snow-thaws, the abrupt changes of temperature, and the droughts—all called for artificial irrigation. In some parts of the country, Western Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and the Punjab, only irrigation could secure good crops.[33]

Irrigation works in India are reported far back in remote antiquity, but they became especially widespread in the period when the first major states were being formed.[34]

The sources of the period contain numerous references to irrigation works. The Buddhist canonical texts refer to the builders of water-conducting canals (*udakaṃ hi nayanti nettikē; Dhammapada*, 80; 145)[35] and describe measures for regulating the inlet of water to fields after sowing (*Cūllavagga*, V.17.2; VII.1.2). The *Jātakas* also report the building of canals and dams, and the digging of wells. Earlier references to such activities are found in Paṇini, who mentions a leather basket for water (*udañcana*) and the yoke (*yugavaratrā*) put on oxen drawing up water.[36]

The *Mahāvagga* contains direct evidence of artificial irrigation in Magadha.[37] In his commentary, Buddhaghoṣa mentions that the field in Magadha were divided into plots of a regular shape and were irrigated.[38]

Large-scale, expensive irrigation work requiring much labour was normally carried out by the state. All free members of village communities also took part in building irrigation works. The *Jātakas* refer to villagers digging water reservoirs (*grāma*) (I.99) and to people, who, in anticipation of long-expected rain, come out with spades and baskets to build dams (I.336). Owners of both farm households and small plots were obliged to take part in the building of irrigation systems. The preface to the *Kāma-Jātaka* (No. 467) tells of a Brahman farmer, who cleared the land of trees and built an embankment around a reservoir (J.IV.167). The Pāli Canon and the *Mahāvastu* list the duties of an agriculturist, which include control of land irrigation.[39]

The Hāthigumpha inscription of Khāravela reports the building of canal by King Nanda of the Nanda dynasty. We know about the system of artificial irrigation in the Mauryan epoch from ancient writings, epigraphy and narrative sources. Megasthenes

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mentions that when he stayed in India there was a special group of state officials who "inspected the sluices (tas . . . diorugas episkopusi) by which water was let out from the main canals into their branches so that every one might have an equal supply of it" (Strabo, XV, 1.50).

Rudradāman's inscription from Junāgarh (Saurāṣṭra) is interesting in this respect : it records that a ruler (*rāṣṭriya*) named Puṣyagupta built a water reservoir in the reign of Candragupta which was furnished with channels (*praṇālibhir alankṛtam*).[40] Irrigation works of that period are also known from excavations.[41]

Patañjali's commentary on Pāṇini refers to irrigation works in the Śuṅga period. The commentary mentions canals for irrigating rice-fields, which were built to save a village from drought (I.1.23).

Irrigation work was carried out not only in the monarchies but also in republics, specifically, in the *gaṇas* of the Koliyas and the Śākyas, as is evident from the canonical writings. Buddhaghoṣa, in his commentary on the *Dīgha-Nikāya*, (XX.1.1) mentions a dam on the Rohiṇī river, built by the Koliyas and the Säkyas (Śākyas) to benefit the agricultural activities of the two republics.[42]

The *Arthaśāstra* contains substantial data on irrigation systems. Kauṭilya fully realised that irrigation was "the basis of crop-growing" and urged the ruler to pay more attention to building and maintaining appropriate systems. The state did, in fact, take great care to keep all those systems in good repair (III.9). A person guilty of damaging them was liable to severe punishment.

Compared with the data of the Pāli Canon, the *Arthaśāstra* reflects a higher level of irrigation technology.[43]

Livestock-breeding and hunting retained an important place in ancient Indian economy, especially in areas with favourable climatic conditions and a lower level of socio-economic development than in the Ganges Valley (the sub-Himalayan regions and the mountain areas of the Vindhyas).

The concern for the promotion of livestock-breeding was largely a consequence of the needs of agriculture. Animals were used for many kinds of field work. They provided a means of transport, used among other things, for transporting troops, and as a source of raw materials for various crafts,[44] and were, therefore, valued very highly. It is noteworthy that the *Suttanipāta* describes cattle as bringing grain (food), strength, beauty and

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happiness.[45] The *Jātakas* also often mention the high value of livestock.[46] The *Takkariya-Jātaka* even stresses that man's well-being depends on livestock (*pusanāthā ayam paja*).[47]

The same thought is expressed by Kātyāyana, who glorified the possession of cattle.[48] This attitude may have been influenced by the Buddhist idea of abstinence from killing living beings, which sharply contrasted with the principles of Brāhmaṇism.[49] It is interesting that Aśoka's edicts contain a long list of animals whose slaughtering was prohibited (V MPE).

Along with the farm households, where a small number of cattle were kept, there were large cattle-breeding farms. Buddhaghoṣa's commentary on the *Suttanipāta*, for instance, mentions an owner of 30,000 head of cattle including 27,000 milch cows.[50] Although these figures are obviously unrealistic, they do provide evidence of considerable concentrations of herds in private hands. Herdsmen were hired for a fixed wage to graze private owners' cattle, which they drove to the pastures or into the forests in the morning. The *Mahāvagga* refers to the rich owner of a livestock farm employing many herdsmen (*gopālaka*). One of the *Jātakas* (No.93) speaks of a herdsman (*gopālaka*) employed by a well-to-do *seṭṭha*. Judging by the *Arthaśāstra* (II.29), herds of individual owners could sometimes (for instance in wartime) be grazed together with the king's herds for a share of the produce. Pāṇini and his commentators also provide evidence of the practice of livestock branding.[51]

Data on the development of livestock-breeding in the Mauryan period have been preserved by Megasthenes. He distinguished herdsmen and hunters as a separate category of the Indian population (Strabo, XV.1.41). It is interesting that Patañjali also refers to the "caste" (*jāti*) of herdsmen (*gopa*), whose status, however, is not quite clear.[52] Ordinary herdsmen seem to have belonged to the *Śūdra-varṇa* or, perhaps, together with farmers were regarded Vaiśyas. According to Megasthenes, "only this group was allowed to keep cattle, and to sell draught animals or let them out in (*sic*) hire" (Strabo, XV.1.14).

Megasthenes is the probable source reporting that herdsmen "neither lived in cities nor in villages, but they were nomadic and lived on the hills" (*Ind.*, XI. II). Indian sources have no data concerning the existence of any considerable nomadic groups in that period; it is not improbable, however, that in this case the

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reference is to the herdsmen's "caste" of the Abhīras, who are well-known from later texts.[53]

Aśoka's edicts show that the state paid much attention to promoting livestock-breeding. Along with such major officials as the *Dharmamahāmātras*, they mention special officials supervising pastures—*Vrajabhūmikas* (XII MPE). Kauṭilya devotes one chapter of his treatise (II. 29) to a cattle supervisor (*goadhyakṣa*), and gives interesting data on the strict system of checking cattle and all produce on the royal cattle-breeding farms. The supervisors were supposed to know the exact number of herds, the number of lost and dead animals, and the amounts of milk and butter (II. 29). Judging by the *Arthaśāstra*, everyone killing or stealing cattle or even instigating such killing was liable to capital punishment.[54]

Economic needs and, above all, military requirements promoted horse-breeding and elephant-breeding. Strabo (XV. 1.41), who follows Megasthenes, writes that a private person is not allowed to keep a stallion or an elephant : stallions and elephants are regarded as crown property and their care is entrusted to special supervisors. This evidence has analogies in Kauṭilya's treatise and in various Buddhist writings (*Jātakas*, the *Mahāvagga*, etc.).[55]

Among the most characteristic phenomena of the period in question was the rapid growth of cities—the centres of crafts, trade and education. The process was particularly intensive in the Ganges Valley, where the first large states took shape. Among the most important were Śrāvastī, Campā, Rajagṛha, Kauśāmbī, Kuśinagara and Vārāṇasī. The sources not only name the cities but also describe their life, appearance and administration. Early Jaina canonic texts mention various types of cities : unfortified cities, cities surrounded by an earthen rampart or a low wall, isolated cities, cities situated on the seashore, large cities and capital cities. As a rule, cities had gates on every side and were walled in and surrounded by a moat and a rampart. Pāṇini and his early commentators furnish data on the fortification systems, on the existence of city gates, the use of bricks in buildings, etc.[56] Besides dwelling houses, there were buildings designed for communal or production purposes—storehouses, workshops, markets, temples, and assembly halls.

Archaeological data show that many townships were built

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according to a certain plan, which is also confirmed by written sources.[57] The *Arthaśāstra* gives a detailed description of the building of city edifices (I. 34). One of Pāṇini's *sūtras* shows that planning preceded the construction work.[58] The art of urban planning was well-known even to the representatives of the Harappa civilisation. It would be premature to gauge the extent to which the Indians of the 6th-3rd centuries B.C. had inherited the experience of their distant predecessors, but recent excavations in North India (for example, in Kauśāmbī) suggest the marked influence of Harappan architectural traditions and even show similarities between the fortification systems in Harappa and the early Kauśāmbī settlements.[59]

Not all townships, however, were built according to a preconceived plan. Even in such a centre as Taxila in the period of the early Bhir Mound (5th-4th centuries B.C.) the streets were crooked, narrow and asymmetrical.[60]

Interesting information has been obtained from excavations at Kauśāmbī, the capital of the state of Vaṁsa (Ganges Valley). City life attained its highest development there in the 6th-mid-5th centuries B.C., which was due to the spread of iron. In this period, a new rampart and a bastion were built and the fortification system was enlarged.[61]

In the subsequent period (5th-4th centuries B.C.), Kauśāmbī was surrounded by new walls and watch towers were erected.

In the 4th-mid-3rd centuries B.C. the entire system of fortification was replaced : special sentry buildings were constructed, the number of towers increased and new walls were erected to connect the watch towers with the top of the city rampart.

Both excavation data and written records provide evidence relating to the major urban centre in this part of India, the imperial capital city of Pāṭaliputra. If we rely on Megasthenes, this city occupied an area of more than 25 square kilometres with a circumference of 34 kilometres—very impressive figures at the time. It will be recalled that Rome in the period of the empire did not exceed 14 kilometres in length, that is, it was much smaller than Pāṭaliputra. The latter by far exceeded in size all other ancient Indian cities, for example, Kauśāmbī (by 11 times) and Śrāvastī (by 20 times). The capital was conveniently located. Arrian placed it at the confluence of the Ganges and the (Erannobos) (Skr. *Hiraṇyavāha*), Patañjali linked Pāṭaliputra with

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the Son river (Skr. *Śoṇa*).[62] In Amara's dictionary (I. 23.33), Śoṇa and Hiraṇyavāha are given as synonyms. Apparently in the period when Megasthenes stayed there, the city stood between the Son and the Ganges. According to the Seleucid ambassador, Pāṭaliputra had the shape of a parallelogram and was surrounded by a wooden stockade and a moat (Strabo, XV. 1.36). The city wall was fortified with 570 towers and had more than 60 gates (*Ind.*, X. 7)

One of the main edifices was the royal palace. Patañjali's grammar mentions the walls surrounding it.[63] Chinese pilgrims reported that during Aśoka's rule, these walls (evidently wooden) were fully or partially replaced by brickwork. Indeed, the excavations by D. Spooner have disclosed the remains of Aśoka's palace, including the "Hall of a Hundred Pillars" (according to some authors, the place where meetings of the Council—*Sabhā* were held),[64] and have enabled us to establish that its foundations were wooden.[65] The well-preserved wood suggests that it had been specially treated. D. Spooner remarked that the state of preservation was hardly believable; the logs of which the hall was made had retained the same smoothness and outer appearance as on the day they were laid down more than two thousand years ago.[66]

Long after the fall of the Mauryas, everyone who saw the palace admired its perfection. The Chinese traveller Fa-hien, who came to India more than six centuries later, was astonished at its magnificence and wrote that it could not have been created by human hands and must have been built by some celestial beings.

Pāṭaliputra was also a commercial centre and meeting place for foreign merchants. By the 4th century B.C., it had come to occupy the dominant position in the whole of the Ganges Valley.[67]

Megasthenes saw special officials who supervised the selling of various articles and collected duties from the goods sold.

The layout of the cities in West India is easily traceable from the recent excavations at Ujjain,[68] the capital of the kingdom of Avanti. Excavations in the 1950's established the continuity in the succession of cultures at this site from the 8th century B.C. to the 15th century A.D. The first period (750-500 B.C.) was marked by the use of iron for manufacturing certain articles and weapons and building fortifications. The discovery of the remains of small settlements outside the fortifications shows that defence

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works served as a kind of citadel for soldiers, artisans and, of course, the privileged groups of the population. The city prospered particularly in the second period (500-200 B.C.). This is evident from the scale of urban construction (public buildings came to be made of burned bricks), from the appearance of new kinds of pottery—Northern Black Polished Ware, and from the development of crafts. Excavations have disclosed a workshop for the manufacture of beads and ivory needles.[69] It is noteworthy that the art of Ujjain craftsmen was also known to the author of the *Periplus of the Erytraean Sea* (§ 48).

The main city in North-West India was Taxila, known as the centre of commerce, craft and education. According to the *Mahāniddesa*, people from all parts of India came here.[70] The *Jātakas* often mention people who came to Taxila wishing to study sciences. J. Marshall's excavations disclosed a fairly comprehensive detailed picture of the city and its history from the time of its foundation.

The sources indicate that the biggest cities were densely populated. Buddhaghoṣa's commentaries, for example, state that in Śrāvastī there were 18 crores of inhabitants.[71] An equally fantastic figure is cited for Rajāgṛha of the Buddha's time.[72]

It would be naive to believe that all urban settlements referred to in the documents as *pura*, *nigama*, *durga* were big cities like those belonging to the group of the main centres of Northern India.[73] To a large extent, they were merely large villages and small fortified settlements. A *pura* frequently grew out of small townships located on trade routes and in areas rich in mineral deposits. Texts list instances of villages (*gāma*) growing into urban settlements (*nigama*), and of villages standing on rivers (*pattana-gāma*) becoming river ports (*panya pattana*).[74] It is noteworthy that some sources make no distinction between *pura*, on the one hand, and *gāma* and *nigama*, on the other. Pāṇini uses two different terms to define a township (*nagara*) and a village (*grāma*), stressing that they refer to East India (VII. 3.14). When referring to the northwestern part of the country, Pāṇini only uses the term *grāma*.

In all likelihood, in the former case the difference between urban and rural settlements was more drastic. Classical writers refer to many cities and towns in West and North-West India. According to Plutarch (LX), Alexander gave king Porus a region

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he had conquered, where there were 5,000 towns. Arrian (*Ind.* X. 1), who follows Megasthenes in this account, says that "the number [of Indian cities] is so great that it cannot be stated with precision." It seems that the Greeks described as cities (*polis*) both towns proper and large villages, which, in their appearance, did not differ much from urban settlements in that period.

The growth of towns led to the formation of an attitude towards urban life and towards townsmen. Whereas the *sūtras* sometimes referred to the towns derisively and with disapproval,[75] the *Arthaśāstra* and the *Purāṇas* describe the city as the backbone of a state.[76]

In the latter half of the first millennium B.C., crafts, which were not always distinguished from the fine arts, blossomed swiftly. Local craftsmen attained to a high degree of mastery and their products were greatly valued.

Local fabrics were famous far beyond the borders of the country. The textile industry was one of the most ancient : it is mentioned in the *Ṛgveda* and other Vedic texts. Moreover, cotton was known here even before the migration of the Indo-Aryans, as the excavations of the sites of Harappan culture show. Clothes made of cotton and cotton fabrics manufactured by Indian craftsmen are mentioned in Pāṇini's grammar (IV. 3.143), Patañjali's work (IV. 1.55) and even in classical writings. Arrian (*Ind.*, XVI. 1.2), quoting Nearchus, wrote about the cotton dress of the Indians. Herodotus (III. 106), although he imagined India as a barren sandy desert, nevertheless remarks that her cotton excelled wool in beauty and good quality.

The main centres of the cotton industry were reported to be Kāśī with its capital at Vārāṇasī,[77] Śibi[78] Mathurā, Vaṅga and Aparānta in West India (*Arth.* II.11). Cotton fabrics manufactured in this part of the country (including Ujjain-Ujjayinī) were a major article of export and were exported to the West via Barygaza (*Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*, §§ 6, 48, 51).

The sources (*Mahāvagga*, I. 30.4; *Dīgha-Nikāya*, II. 349) contain numerous references to hemp clothes. The use of woollen clothes were also widespread.[79] According to Kauṭilya, linen-manufacturing centres were Kāśī and Puṇḍra (Bengal), and Gandhāra (*J.*, VI. 5000) was a wool centre.

Silk was known to ancient Indians as early as the 13th

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century B.C. as shown by the excavations at Nevasa,[80] but only in the period under consideration did it begin to be manufactured on a large scale.

Considerable mineral reserves favoured the development of metallurgy. Indians had known bronze, copper, silver, gold and other metals since time immemorial.[81] But these metals did not play a big role in the latter half of the first millennium B.C. when iron had moved to the forefront.

Many metal workers were employed in royal workshops (*Arth.*, II.12); Pāṇini (VI. II.63) uses the term *rājaśilpin*, "royal craftsman". Others worked independently or in workshops not directly subordinated to the king. Smiths who made farming and handicraft tools (ploughshares, axes, goads, etc.) and some kinds of weapons were highly esteemed. The *Jātakas* (II. 281) mention settlements of smiths where people would come to purchase metal articles.

Kauṭilya writes that since the production of farming tools depended largely on smiths, a special superintendent was to supervise prompt fulfilment of orders (II. 24). Town smiths enjoyed rather a high status and like Brahmans lived in the northern parts of cities, where the patron deities of the city and king were located (*Arth.*, II. 4).

Classical authors, Diodorus (II. 41) and Strabo (XV. 1.46), in particular, provide additional data on armour smiths. Unlike other craftsmen, they paid no taxes but received wages from the king for, as Strabo writes, they "worked only for him". Similar evidence is found in Arrian who seems to have followed Megasthenes in this regard (*Ind.*, XII. 1).

Goldsmiths also lived in the rich quarters of the city (*Arth.*, II. 13.14). That goldsmithery had reached a high level of development can be judged not only from written sources but also by images or ornaments on sculptural monuments and the fine articles found in excavations of settlements of the epoch in question. Special craftsmen worked silver, copper, lead, etc. Royal jewellery workshops were strictly controlled by the state; entry was forbidden to strangers, all the workers were searched at the exit and were not allowed to take their tools with them.

Ivory engravers held important position amongst craftsmen. Judging by the *Jātakas*, they occupied whole streets in the cities. In *Vārāṇasī*, the centre of this industry, there was a special bazār

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for selling ivory articles (*J.*, I. 197).

The art of wood-carving also flourished in the Mauryan epoch. This is borne out by excavations of the palace of the Mauryan rulers in Pāṭaliputra.[82] The art of stone-working was particularly highly developed, as testified to by Aśoka's pillars, numerous specimens of rock sculpture, etc. Judging by the surviving material, there were several centres of this craft at the time. Engravers from Taxila were the best known.

Carpenters, potters and leather dressers were present in Indian towns and villages. Patañjali noted that in the villages there were at least five groups of craftsmen including a potter and a carpenter.[83] Pāṇini knew a village carpenter (*grāma-takṣā*, V. 4.95) who worked by day in customers' houses, and a *kauṭa- takṣā*, a carpenter who had a workshop of his own (*kuṭī*).

Patañjali refers to a special class of king's carpenters who seem to have been directly subordinate to the king's officials. Such carpenters worked only on orders from the ruler (*takṣā rājakarmāṇi pravartamānaḥ svam karma jahāti*, *Mahābhāṣya*, (II. 2.1).

On the basis of the data given in Buddhist texts, Pāṇini and classical authors, it is possible to see in greater detail the arrangement and location of crafts and particular handicraft industries in specific regions of the country. The *Jātakas* refer to villages with specialisations. In many towns, there were streets and quarters inhabited by craftsmen practising the same trade. The *Jātakas* (I. 320) mention a street inhabited by ivory engravers in Vārāṇasī, the dyers' street (IV. 82) and the weavers' quarter of a city in Andhra (I- 356), etc. Interesting data on the localisation of crafts are found in the *Arthaśāstra* in the chapter on the internal structure of a town (II. 4). According to Kauṭilya, workshops were usually located in its south-eastern part; weavers, wool-beaters, leather-dressers, manufacturers of armour, weapons and shields lived in its western part; smiths and jewellers in its northern part, etc.

Craftsmen of different social and property statuses engaged in a common trade were united in professional corporations—*śreṇis*. The establishment of such corporations was promoted both by the localisation of crafts and the hereditary nature of trades, which were handed down from generation to generation. The term *śreṇi*, which is found in Pāṇini's grammar (II. 1.59), was interpreted by his late commentators as "a group of people

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living by a common craft or trade''.[84] This form of craft and trade organisation was particularly developed in the post-Mauryan period, in the first centuries A.D.[85] Detailed information on it is found in the *Śāstras*. As for the *Jātakas*, they give no information about the internal structure of the *śreṇi*. Only one of them (No. 538) mentions 18 *śreṇīs* created by the king of Kāśī, but it does not specify their specialisation.

Craftsmen's corporations played an important role in economic, political and social life, for even Kauṭilya, a firm advocate of centralisation, advises the king to grant them certain privileges (II. 4).[86]

Śreṇīs were organised according to a rigid principle and were headed by hereditary chiefs, *jeṭṭhaka* (*J.*, II. 295: II. 405); they had internal statutes, breaches of which were severely punished, sometimes by expelling the culprit from the corporation. The *Śāstras* mention special "laws" (*dharma*) of the *śreṇi* (*Mānava Dharmaśāstra*, VIII. 41).[87] The corporations were responsible for all their members, to whom they rendered aid in case of calamity (*Arth.*, IV. 1). Conflicts often arose between individual organisations (cf. *J.*, II. 12; VI. 332), apparently springing from competition. Such conflicts threatened the development of crafts and the central authorities strove to settle them.

The independence of the *śreṇi* was sometimes so great that the king and the guilds were sometimes dependent on each other. The Sātavāhana and the Vākāṭaka inscriptions mention direct economic relations between the state and these corporations.[88]

The central authorities, interested in the promotion of crafts, protected the craftsmen's rights. "If somebody deprives a craftsman of hand or eye," Strabo wrote (XV. 1.54), "he is punished by death." This is corroborated by Kauṭilya's treatise (III. 19).

On the other hand, their activities were under strict control. Judging by the *Arthaśāstra* (II. 1), their corporations had to be registered in towns and they had no right to move to another place without official permission.[89] In this way, the state not only controlled the corporations' activities but also prevented their division and disintegration. In general, the strict control of the craftsmen's organisations, supplemented by the considerable aid given to them, conformed to the overall orientation of the internal policy of the Mauryas.

The rise of agriculture and the growth of crafts led to a

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considerable development of trade. The formation of a unified Empire favoured the regulation of trade, the building of communications and their protection, and contacts between individual provinces, particularly between them and the centre of the empire, Magadha.[90]

Kātyāyana enumerates several types of trade routes: those leading through forests (*kāntārapatha*), through the jungles (*jaṅgalapatha*), overland routes (*sthalapatha*), and waterways (*vāripatha*).[91] According to Megasthenes, special officials (*agronomoi*) supervised road-building: a pillar showing the "turns" and the distance had to be put up every ten stadia (Strabo, XV, 1.50). Aśoka's edicts, too, provide ample data on the building and the improvement of roads. This activity was supervised by such high state officials as *rājukas*.

According to the *Jātakas*, the main trade routes were the northern route (*Uttarāpatha*), leading from East India northwestwards to Taxila, and the southern route (*Dakṣiṇāpatha*), which linked Rājagṛha, the old capital of Magadha, with Pratiṣṭhāna on the Godavari river.[92] The first main road was known as far back as Pāṇini's time (V.1.77). It ran though Bactria, where the trade routes from the Mediterranean, Central Asia and China crossed. Megasthenes knew a road linking Pāṭaliputra with the northwestern regions. Strabo (XV.1.11) (probably proceeding from the data supplied by the Seleucid ambassador) reported that its length was 10,000 stadia, as measured by a special cord. It is possible that as early as the time of the Mauryas and their successors, it extended beyond Pāṭaliputra up to the eastern coast. Strabo (XV.1.11) wrote that the route from the Maurya capital to the east was measured probably when sailing from the sea up the Ganges, but Pliny (VI.21) had already given detailed information on each section of this route. It is possible that the Greek writer, Iambulus, arrived in Pāṭaliputra by the royal road after his ship had been wrecked on the Indian shore. According to Diodorus (II.60.2), this voyage from the sea to Pāṭaliputra took many days.

Besides, trade routes led from Vārāṇasī to Ujjayinī, Videha, Śrāvastī, Taxila, Kapilavastu, Kuśinārā, Mathurā, Mithilā, from Rājagṛha to Śrāvastī and Puṣkalāvatī, from Śrāvastī to Kauśāmbī and Pratiṣṭhāna, and from Sāketa to Pāṭaliputra.

Despite the care taken by the authorities, roads in ancient

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India were in an extremely poor condition. It took merchants and travellers a great deal of effort and inventiveness to get to many of the regions. Besides, roads usually connected only the larger cities, mostly in the northern part of the country. Fa-hien, who visited India at the beginning of the 5th century, described the roads in the south, as very dangerous and difficult.

River trade played an important role, especially along the Ganges and the Jamna. These rivers connected Campā with Śrāvastī, and Vārānaṣī with Kauśāmbī,[93] and, as the *Jātakas* attest, Tāmralipti (Tamluk). In the Mauryan period, when some of the southern areas had been incorporated into the empire, contacts between the North and the South became closer. Buddhist texts contain data on merchants' journeys from South India to the North.[94] The *Arthaśāstra* mentions a number of types of stone mined in the South.

Sea trade particularly developed in the post-Mauryan period in the first century, A.D. as a result of growing commercial relations with Rome;[95] however, as far back as the 4th-1st centries B.C., ancient Indians organised trade expeditions (often quite long ones) to neighbouring as well as distant countries.[96] Indian merchants visited Ceylon, Suvarṇabhūmi (supposedly Burma), the country of Baveru (possibly Babylon)[97] and made voyages to South Arabia and the eastern coasts of Africa.[98] Evidently their ships had sailed along the shore of the Erythraean sea and in the Persian Gulf even before Alexander's campaign: the fleet of Nearchus bound for Babylon was accompanied by a local pilot who knew the way to the contemporary Hormuz (*Ind.*, XXII.1). Aśoka's inscriptions mention relations between India and Ceylon, Egypt, Asia Minor and the Mediterranean; citing Calisthenes, Athenaeus reported that during festivals, Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285-286 B.C.) displayed Indian dogs and Indian breeds of cattle.[99] Indian maidens were also brought here during his time. Strabo reports (II.3.4) that during the reign of Euergetes II (2nd century B.C.) a group of merchants was sent from Egypt to India. One of them, named Eudoxus, returned to Egypt with perfumes and precious stones.[100] Sea voyages undertaken by Indians are also illustrated by the sculptures of Sanchi.

The available sources give an idea of the commodities of Indian imports and exports.[101] The former were mostly horses, gold, arsenic, antimony, glass, sesame and some kinds of stones,

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The main items of export were spices, perfumes, precious stones, ivory articles,[102] cotton fabrics, silk, rice, and various sorts of wood and dyes. In the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* (§ 31) we are told of women slaves brought from Barygaza (Broach) to Socotra island and thence sent westwards. A list of commodities in Pāṇini's work indicates that the commodity turnover included handicrafts and agricultural produce, consumer goods and luxury articles. Along with such commodities, the Indian grammarian mentions iron chains, ploughshares, spades, metals (gold, silver, copper, etc.), weapons, woollen fabrics, ceramics, leather articles, animal skins (tiger, leopard), musical instruments, perfumes and foodstuffs.

Close contacts between Mauryan India and foreign countries, primarily the Hellenistic states of the West, made it necessary for the Mauryan government to set up a special council to receive and take care of foreigners (Strabo, XV.1.51), including foreign merchants coming to Indian cities. In general, the growth of navigation[103] and sea travel necessitated the establishment of a special administrative body headed by a *navarchus* (admiral of the fleet) (Strabo, XV.1.46). The latter was apparently in charge of all matters of sea-trade and ship-building. According to Kauṭilya, there was also a "superintendent of harbours" and a "superintendent of navigation", who were in-charge of the control of sea-routes, navigation in the estuaries and transportation across lakes. They also levied tolls from ships coming into harbours.

While promoting domestic and foreign trade, helping merchants, taking care of the commercial routes and improving and protecting them, the state at the same time took pains to bring trade under strict control and to supervise the entire system of trade transactions.

The council of city officials – *astynomoi*, consisting of five members—dealt with matters concerning the regulation of prices, and the care of markets, harbours and temples (Strabo, XV.1.51). According to the *Arthaśāstra*, the "superintendent of trade" had the duty to keep an exact record of various goods coming through waterways and overland, to know the price and the most appropriate time for selling various commodities, etc. The state took account of the profits gained by merchants, especially those selling royal goods, levied considerable taxes on them and vigilantly supervised payments thereof. According to Megasthenes, special officials in cities "collected a tithe from goods sold." A merchant

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who dared to conceal a transaction was punished by death (Strabo, XV.1.51).

A typical feature of the economic development of India in the latter half of the first millennium B.C., was the emergence of a monetary system.[104] This was the evidence of the growth of commodity and money relations; it greatly affected the country's economy and the pattern of social relations, and completely undermined the foundations of the tribal system, which proved powerless against "the victorious march of money" (F. Engels).

Initially, the media of exchange were pieces of metal; however, gradually they were given a definite shape, worked and covered with various signs, images and drawings.

Literary and archaeological data indicate that ancient Indian coins should be dated from the 6th-5th centries B.C. Archaeologists have found specimens of cast copper coins in layers dated from the middle of the first millennium B.C.[105] The more recent coins bear images. In a hoard of the 4th century B.C. from Taxila, bent-bar coins were found, mostly made of silver, whereas no such coins were found in a hoard of the 3rd century B.C.

In the 4th-3rd centuries B.C. punch-marked coins became widespread. Various symbols were punched on these coins which were generally made of silver and copper and were of different shapes, weights and sizes. As a rule, archaeologists find hoards of silver coins because they were hoarded as valuable objects.

Such coins have been found in many parts of the country : in Eran (Madhya Pradesh), for instance, 3,268 coins were found, and in Amaravati (Andhra Pradesh), about 8,000 coins.[106] The latter find proves that money circulation also existed in the South, although in the preceding period it had greatly lagged behind both in the level and rate of development. In West India, which had long been under the rule of the Achaemenids and was then subjugated by Alexander, punch-marked coins were in circulation along with Persian sigloi and Greek tetradrachms. It is noteworthy that Persian coins have marked traces of the influence of local traditions : they bear signs and symbols resembling those of Indian punch-marked coins.[107] J. Marshall's team unearthed near Taxila a hoard containing a copper coin with the name of Alexander, a silver coin with the name of Philip Aridaeus and local silver punch-marked coins. Some of the latter show Greek and Seleucid influence.[108] On the whole, the appearance of coins in the country

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was a result of considerable economic progress achieved in that period.

The theory, advanced by a number of scholars, that Indian coinage was of foreign origin cannot be accepted today as it contradicts the data of the surviving archaeological and literary materials.[109] However, it is natural that at the time of the invasion of the Indo-Greeks, Śakas and other peoples, the local coins would often borrow from the shape, weight and legend of foreign coins.

Symbols on punch-marked coins are of considerable interest. Initially, they were associated with the symbols on the seals of Mohenjo-Daro and their Buddhist affiliations were also pointed out. The Indian scholar, D.D. Kosambi, has offered a different interpretation. In his view, every symbol could be related to a certain dynasty or even to the rule of some particular king.[110] For instance, the representation of a peacock is associated with the Mauryan dynasty (specifically, with King Bindusāra) and the figure of three linked circles, with the reign of Aśoka. This hypothesis certainly deserves attention, though it needs further substantiation and confirmation.[111]

The eminent English numismatist, J. Allan, advanced the view that the five principal signs on the punch-marked coins symbolise five governmental committees mentioned by Megasthenes.[112] So far, however, this idea has not been corroborated by any other data. There is also the supposition that these symbols are related to individual trade and craft corporations. It is known that coins were also struck by republican associations.[113]

As early as the period of Pāṇini's grammar and early Buddhist writings, there occur names of many coins which differ from one another by weight and metal.[114] Judging by these sources, the use of silver and copper *kārṣāpaṇas* were most widespread. Besides, there circulated gold *niṣka* and *suvarṇa*, silver *śatamāna*, *māṣa* and *śāṇa*, and copper *kākiṇī*, and *māṣa*. An analysis of literary evidence suggests that specific types of coins were used only in certain parts of the country. Most coins were based on the *rati*, a unit of weight equal to 0.118 gram. A copper *kārṣāpaṇa* usually weighed 80 *rati*, and a silver *purāṇa*, 32 *rati*.

That money circulation was widespread is confirmed by data in the *Arthaśāstra* which show that there were fixed monthly salaries for state officials. Fines too were expressed in terms of

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coins. Among state officials, there were special superintendents of the mint and coin supervisors. The latter kept under strict control the coins to be stored in the treasury and those to be issued for circulation (II. 12).

Sources refer to various money transactions by private individuals and the state. As far back as Pāṇini, terms are found for creditor (*uttamarṇa*), debtor (*adhamarṇa*), loan (*ṛṇa*), interest rate (*vṛddhi*), etc.[115] Kauṭilya discusses at length the *Arthaśāstra*, the legitimate rate was 1.25 per cent a month, which for commercial transactions was raised to 5 per cent and for transactions made on the sea as high as 20 per cent. Any transgression of these regulations was punished by a fine.

In the epigraphs of the Sātavāhana period, interesting data on monetary transactions between the state or private individuals and the craftsmen's corporations have been found. An inscription from Nasik, for instance, tells that Uṣavadāta, kṣatrapa Nahapāna's son-in-law, donated 3,000 *karṣāpaṇas* to the Buddhist community and lent 2,000 *kārṣāpaṇas* to one *śreṇi* at a monthly interest rate of 1 *padika* per one hundred *kārṣāpaṇa*, and 1,000 *kārṣāpaṇas* to another *śreṇi* at an interest rate of 0.75 *padika*.[116] A similar inscription from Nasik reports that a cartain lady, Viṣṇudattā, donated to the community, the interest from the sum which she had given to the corporations of potters and buttermen. Although, they refer to a later epoch, these data give an idea of the process which could have begun already in the period under review.

Certainly, the evidence we have used by no means covers all the sources available, but they seem sufficient for a general outline and analysis of the main features of the economic development of India in the Magadha-Mauryan epoch.

2. Land Ownership

The problem of land ownership in ancient India has not so far been dealt with satisfactorily even in specialised studies; it remains a debatable subject in studies of the social structure of the ancient societies of the Near East.[117] Recent investigations (both general and special) have however not led to full elucidation. Mowever, there is no unanimity even regarding the definitions of

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such terms as "ownership", "possession", "property", "right of ownership",[118] etc., although students of mediaeval India[119] have given much attention to this problem.

Recent studies on the socio-economic development of the Asian countries further indicate the divergence of scholarly opinion on these matters. This is in itself indicative of the topical importance of the subject.[120]

This diversity of opinion is to some extent due to the inadequacy of theoretical concepts, but it is also accounted for by the paucity of reliable sources. A student of ancient India does not have at his disposal any household accounts, archival records or private legal documents and thus has to depend on the isolated data of religious literature which give very poor and often biased information on these matters. The epigraphic data on land ownership appeared not earlier than the first centuries A.D., and the *Śāstras* setting forth the principles of the Brahmanic schools vis-a-vis land-ownership rights are even more recent.

The *Arthaśāstra* acquires particular significance in this context since it contains a detailed exposition of economic development, primarily of the organisation and management of royal estates. The fragmentary nature of our knowledge of land ownership and the contradictions in the sources, account for the different assessments of this problem made by contemporary researchers. Many of them hold the view that all land in ancient India was owned by the state and there was no private ownership thereof.[121] These scholars refer to the right of the state, in the person of the king, to dispose of vacant lands and woods, which is mentioned in the *Arthaśāstra* (II.1.2), and of mineral deposits (*Arth.*, II.I; Mānava Dharmaśāstra, VIII. 39, etc.). They also refer to the data given by Megasthenes, who reported that land tillers paid their land tax to the king, for the whole of India was allegedly his property; besides, they have cited the evidence of Kauṭilya's treatise (II. 1), which states that the ruler should take the land away from persons who do not till it and give it to others.

The protagonists of the theory of state monopoly of land interpreted the payment of taxes to the king as a kind of rent and saw in it a proof of his right to dispose of all the land available in the country.[122]

Analysis of narrative and epigraphic sources relating to various epochs in ancient India's history (primarily the *Śāstras*,

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the data of the Sātavāhana and Gupta inscriptions) led another group of scholars to an opposite conclusion, namely, that in ancient India, there existed private ownership of land.[123]

A third view was advanced, which differed from the earlier ones and was corroborated by certain writings (in particular, Jaiminī's *Mīmāṁsā-sūtra*) that land ownership was communal.[124]

It must be said that the problems of ownership and possession (including that of land) were also solved differently by ancient Indians themselves, their concepts having changed in different periods. On the basis of amply documented data, J. Jolly came to the conclusion that in ancient India, the concept "ownership" was denoted by the pronoun *svam* ("one's own") and the terms *svatva*, *svāmya*, *svāmin*, *svāmitva*; and the concept "possession", by the verb *bhuj* ("to use", "to enjoy") and its derivatives *bhukti*, *bhoga*, *upabhoga*, etc.[125] The *Dharmasūtras* describe the ways a man can become an owner (*svāmī*). For example, Gautama (X. 39) says that ownership can be acquired through inheritance, purchase, partition, seizure or finding. In commenting on Pāṇini, Patañjali noted that the concept "one's own" is associated with purchase, acquisition, exchange or receiving as alms.[126] He also mentions (III. 1.87) private ownership of arable land.

Later *Dharmaśāstras* contain a more detailed discussion of the question.[127] It is significant that some of them express the idea that the mere fact of possession is insufficient for an owner's status which must be legally sanctioned.[128] *Mānava Dharmaśāstra* (X. 115) stresses that there are several ways of obtaining the right to ownership, viz. purchase, donation, conquest, lending, inheritance and others.

According to Yājñavalkya (II. 28), possession (*bhoga*) is valid when it is accompanied by a clear title.[129] Moreover, an owner who has no legal right is treated as a thief. According to Nārada, a person using land without a written document is to be punished for theft.[130] However, according to Yājñavalkya (II. 27), possession of a certain property for three generations gives the owner the right to legal ownership. The *Viṣṇu-smṛti* (V. 185) says that if somebody possesses something with a proper title, it can never be taken away from him.

Detailed statutes were elaborated in the *Dharmaśāstras* of a later period. In the period under study, old common-law traditions must have continued to play an important part. In all

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likelihood, this was also the case with the ownership of land.

As agriculture developed, land came to be regarded as the main source of all wealth.[131] In the *Majjhima-Nikāya* (I. 230), it is stated that thanks to land, all work requiring strength can be carried out on land.[132]

The question of land ownership was made a subject of discussion for the first time in the Laws of Manu, but the principle postulated in Manu had its origin in the remote past: "A field belongs to the man who has cleared the forest and a deer to him who first killed it" (IX. 44).[133] The same idea is found in the *Milindapāñho*: "If a man who has cleared land of trees gets it, people say: this is his land. But that land is not made by him. It is because he has brought the land into use that he is called the owner of the land" (*bhūmisāmiko*).[134]

Certainly, this situation could persist only as long as there were vast tracts of unoccupied land, when the state had not yet laid claim to all waste and uncultivated lands and when the question of the right of ownership had not yet been raised.

By the Mauryan period, the situation had already changed, although, as has already been mentioned, there were as yet no strict legal norms like those which developed later and which are known to us from the *Dharmaśāstras*. It can be said with certainty that in the latter half of the first millennium B.C. the concept of land ownership, including private ownership, was further elaborated.[135]

In the Pāli Canon and later on in the early *Śāstras*, land, like any other immovable or movable property, was treated as belonging to the household owner. In the *Suttanipāta* (XX.11), a *bhikṣu* having no children, cattle, cultivated land (*khetta*) or house is contrasted with an owner possessing all those items. The *Mahāvagga* (III.11.4) mentions cultivated land along with other property (gold, cattle, a dwelling house, slaves) which a lay woman may offer a monk and which he must refuse. Some data on private (individual) land ownership are found in the *Arthaśāstra*, though most of the references in that text are to royal estates. Kauṭilya uses the term *svāmika* ("owner") in relation to the selling of land (III.9) and violation of the owner's right (III.10).

The *Mānava Dharmaśāstra* (VIII.264) lists cultivated field, house, pond and orchard among the main categories of property owned by a private person; their misappropriation was fined. In

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the *Jātakas*, numerous examples are reported of the existence of boundaries between plots of individual owners named *khettapati*, *khettasāmika*, "owners of a field, of cultivated land."[136] We can find many examples of private ownership of land in Buddhist texts (*Mahāvastu*, I.346; *Divyāvadāna*, p. 346, *Therigāthā*, 19).

The landowners included rich landlords who possessed large estates and owners of medium-sized plots. Together with the community members who possessed smaller plots, the latter constituted the main group of landowners.

Private estates were sometimes very large. The *Suttanipāta*, (I.4), one of the earliest Buddhist canonical writings, mentions a household where 500 ploughs were used. Sometimes, land was measured by hundreds of *karīsas*.[137] Such estates belonged to Brahmans, *seṭṭhas* and, in the republics, primarily to *Kṣatriya-rājas*. One of the *Jātakas* (III.293) refers to the estate of a Brāhmaṇa measuring 1000 *karīsas* . Its fields were tilled by slaves and hired labourers, (*karmakaras*). A similar private estate is mentioned in another *Jātaka* (IV.276). Its owner, a Brāhmaṇa, leased half the land and the remaining part was tilled by slaves and *karmakaras*.

The *Samyutta-Nikāya* (I.172) also tells us of a Brāhmaṇa landowner, whose land was tilled by 500 ploughs. According to Buddhaghoṣa's commentary, this required 3,000 oxen.[138] Fields were tilled by farm hands called *kassakapurisā* (apparently, hired labourers) who worked in terms of ten. Larger estates were managed by stewards. One such steward is described reporting to his dying master on the state of his fields, villages, etc.[139]

The sources, particularly the *Jātakas*, have also recorded substantial data relating to smaller private estates. In all likelihood, the owners tilled their land themselves, helped only by their family (III.162; IV.276). For instance, they mention a plot of eight *karīsas* (IV.281), an impoverished Brāhmaṇa who had only one ox for ploughing (II.165), and a former king's servant, engaged in farming, who had to borrow oxen for ploughing (II.300). Medium-sized households sometimes used slave labour (III.162) but only on a minor scale; obviously, *karmakaras* were also hired.

The owners could sell[140] (although, as will be seen, under certain restrictions), donate,[141] mortgage and lease, the land they possessed, or part of it, that is, they were the full legal proprietors. Land is mentioned as early as the time of Gautama (XIX.16) and Baudhāyana (III.10.14) among the main kinds of gifts. In the

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Salikedāra-Jātaka there is a story of a Brāhmaṇa giving away part of his landed estate (IV.281) and the *Cūllavagga* (IV.4.9) tells of a merchant purchasing a garden from a crown prince. Evidences of the possibility of sale and purchase of land are found in the *Arthaśāstra* (III.9). Vaśiṣṭha (XXIX.16) states that a donation of land (*bhūmidāna*) can purge a man of a grave sin.[142] In the early *Dharmasūtras*, dated by most scholars from the 5th-3rd centuries B.C., there are indications that land was leased by private owners. According to Āpastamba, the tenants of such plots were to pay an indemnity to the owner[143], should the land fail to produce the expected crop owing to a lack of zeal on their part.

The authenticity of the narrative source is confirmed by epigraphic data, though of a later period. Most inscriptions relating to the gift and sale of land belong to the Ṣātavāhana and Vākāṭaka epochs. They suggest that the first half of the first millennium witnessed the widespread of private land ownership. Instances are particularly numerous in Gupta inscriptions. They mention gifts of land to Brāhmaṇas, transfer of various immunity rights, etc.[144] Obviously, social relations prevailing in the Gupta epoch and even in the Sātavāhana period greatly differed from those which took shape in the period under study; therefore, the epigraphy of the first half of the first millennium A.D. is not a reliable source for characterising the land ownership in the Mauryan age. However, the data of the earliest of these epigraphic documents—those of the Sātavāhana period—throw some light on the overall pattern of land relations and show the stage of development of different forms of land ownership and land tenure which had appeared far earlier.

The Sātavāhana inscriptions mention several categories of landowners. These include *Mahāraṭhikas*,[145] who occupied an important position in the state machinery, Brāhmaṇas[146] and ordinary laymen who professed Buddhism.[147] They possessed plots of 2, 3, 4, 8, 9, 12, 20, 26 *nivartanas*.[148] In the Vākāṭaka period, tradesmen sometimes owned land.[149] Of particular interest is the inscription of Uṣavadāta, the Śaka ruler Nahapāna's son-in-law, who acted as a representative of the royal authority.[150] This inscription from Nasik states that he gave the monks a field (*kṣetram*) which he personally (in the text *hathe*, that is, "from hands", "out of hands") bought (*kīṇita*) for 4,000 *kārṣāpaṇas* from a Brāhmaṇa who had inherited it from his father. It is remarkable

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that, despite his high position, Uṣavadāta could not donate the Brāhmaṇa's land to the monks but had first to buy it.

The sources explain at some length the statute concerning the protection of the rights of owners of various kinds of property. In the *Arthaśāstra* (III.16), there is a special section enumerating the most significant of these rights. Of great importance was a provision under which even when relatives of a Brāhmaṇa used some immovables (property, land) in the absence of their owner[151] they could not appropriate it on the ground that they had used it. A gift or sale, the *Mānava Dharmaśāstra* emphasised, made by anybody but the owner, must be considered as null and void, according to the rule in judicial proceedings (VIII.199). Thus, the owner alone could decide on the purchase or transfer of his property, including the immovable assets (in particular, land),[152] and his rights were protected. The state even bore special obligations in respect of private owners. Kauṭilya writes : "As to sale without ownership, however, on finding a lost or stolen article, the owner shall cause it to be seized by the judge. Or, if the place and time are likely to be missed, he should himself seize it and bring it (to the judge). And the judge should question the possessor, "Where did you get this?" If he were to show a legitimate method (of purchase), but not the vendor, he shall be acquitted on handing over that article. If the vendor were found, he shall pay the price (to the purchaser) and a fine for theft" (*Arth.*, III.16; Kangle's translation).[153] An early Buddhist writing, the *Aṅguttara-Nikāya* (II.122), contains an interesting idea : by inflicting terrible torture on one who steals another man's property, the king causes fear of punishment for such acts : *so daṇḍabhayassa bhīto na paresaṃ pābhataṁ palumpanto carati.*

"If one," Kauṭilya says, "does not till land that is inalienable, another may use it for five years and return it after receiving compensation for his exertions" (III.10). Similar statements are found in Nārada (XI.23-24).[154] Nobody could interfere with a landowner's affairs. Anybody selling another man's property without his consent was considered a thief (Manu, VIII.197). A heavy fine was imposed for seizure of land. The fine for illegal appropriation of fields was equal to that for robbery—from 200 to 5000 *paṇas* (*Arth.*, III.17). According to Gautama (XIII.17), a man stealing land was doomed to hell. A misdeed like the theft of a field was to be purged by the so-called lunar penance

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Mānava Dharmaśāstra (XI, 164), usually imposed only for a grave sin. Fines were also imposed for building irrigation works and for erecting sanctuaries and temples on other man's land (*Arth.* III.10). Similar provisions are elaborated at even greater length in the later *Śāstras*, in Nārada and Yājñavalkya. For example, Yājñavalkya (II.155) fixed a fine for the infringement of a boundary between two fields and for tilling the land of a private person.

The damage caused to crops by grazing cattle was to be reimbursed to the owner (*Arth.*, III. 9). Only the owner of the land could enjoy its gifts. "Those who, having no property in a field, but possessing seed-corn, sow it in another's soil do indeed not receive the grain of the crop which may spring up." *Mānava Dharmāśastra* (IX. 49). "If seed be carried by water or wind into somebody's field and germinates [there], the (plant sprung from that) the seed even belongs to the owner of the field, the owner of the seed does not receive the crop" (IX. 54).

Nevertheless, the right of the owner to sell and donate land was not always absolute and was in many cases controlled by the community, since most of the owners of small plots were its members as well as by the state.

In the period under review, the community exerted considerable influence and took great pains to hamper the development of private land ownership. This is even mentioned in the *Arthaśāstra*, a treatise primarily aimed at consolidating royal power and hence at weakening the community.

In the chapter "On the Sale of Immovable Property" (III. 9), Kauṭilya sets forth a procedure whereby the privilege of buying all kinds of immovables (fields, gardens, irrigation works) was enjoyed first by relatives, next by neighbours and creditors, followed by other persons. The privileged position of relatives in property transactions is emphasised by the *Mānava Dharmaśāstra* (VIII. 198). A man selling another man's property was declared a thief and severely punished, but if he was a relative of the owner, he was merely fined. The terms of sale of a field, garden or an irrigation work were announced in the presence of the neighbours and the elders. The *Mānava Dharmaśāstra* (VIII. 262) warns that in setting the boundaries of fields, gardens and houses, the neighbours' opinion should be heard. The same is said in Nārada,[155] and Bṛhaspati (XIX. 26),[156] Noteworthy are

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the data of the *Kātyāyana-smṛti* stating that in disputes over fields, houses, wells, gardens or irrigation works, the neighbours' (*sāmanta*) opinion was decisive.[157] In the absence of the latter, the judgement of those who had lived there earlier was sought. Next, the elders (*vṛddhāḥ*) were consulted.[158] A field could be sold in a village only if those entitled to pre-emption (*avyāhataṃ*),[159] that is the elders, did not object. Mitākṣarā's commentary (on Yājñavalkya, II. 114) says that the sale of a plot (evidently belonging to a member of the community) took place only with the consent of the village (*grāma*), relatives and neighbours.

At the same time, the existence of the community protected landowners from an infringement upon their rights. On the one hand, community means a reciprocal relationship between these free and equal private owners, their association against the external world; at the same time it is their safeguard (K. Marx).[160] The community protected its members from pressures exerted by the state, which strove to control the economic life of all private owners including community members.

Even property transactions within a community were sometimes carried out with the participation of state representatives. The latter strictly supervised financial operations, deducting certain sums, in case of any violation of the established norms. If in selling a field, garden or irrigation work, the price of these immovables grew as a result of bargaining, a surplus was to be paid to the treasury (*Arth.*, III. 9); heavy fines were imposed for any violation of the rules of sale. Moreover, if a dispute over fields between villages did not result in an agreement, the fields were to become the state property. Evidently, such fields were categorised as land which could no longer be regarded as the property of an individual or a community; therefore the right to use that land passed over to the state in the person of the king.[161] When, for some reason or other, there were no fixed boundaries between plots of land, the allotment was done by the king at his discretion (*yathoyapakāraṃ vibhajet*). "The king shall fix, according as it may be beneficial, the boundary, the extent of the marks of which is lost" (*Arth.*, III. 9; Kangle's translation). This made both private owners and the community as a whole keep the boundary marks in good order : the state seems to have taken every opportunity of disposing of land which could be regarded as "having no boundary".[162] It took over the immovables

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(land) also in the case of the absence of an owner (*pranaṣṭasvāmikam*) or his heirs (*Arth.*, III. 9).

The supreme power in the country was wielded by the king who, as the sovereign, was entitled to supervise all aspects of life in the state. The ruler was regarded as the protector of the people and their property. He was described as "the Lord of the soil" both by the *Mānava Dharmaśāstra* (VIII. 39) and the commentator Medhātithi, but in practice this did not mean that he actually owned all cultivated land.[163] The owners paid to him a definite share of the crops (usually one-sixth) as the protector of their rights to land ownership, not as the proprietor. This fact was reflected in the *Dharmasūtras* and the later *Dharmaśāstras*,[164] in particular in Gautama (X. 24-29) and Nārada (XVIII. 48). The *Baudhāyana-Dharmasūtra* (I. 10.18.1) says, "Let the king protect his subjects, receiving the sixth part in reward (*ṣaḍbhāga*)". In the epics he is often named *ṣaḍbhāgin*, "receiving one-sixth". It is significant that the idea of a reward given to the sovereign for protection is found not only in Brāhmaṇic but also in Buddhist sources.[165]

Many commentators of the Mimāṁsā school explained that the king collected taxes not because he was the owner of the land but because, as the sovereign, he was obliged to protect his subjects.[166] The ancient Indian theoreticians thus substantiated the ruler's right to impose taxes on the inhabitants of the country.[167] "The king not protecting (his subjects), but receiving his share as tax was declared to have taken upon himself all the impurity of the people" (Manu, VIII. 308). He was regarded as an immoral man (*adhārmaikaḥ*) "a thief stealing the sixth part" (*baliṣaḍbhāgataskara*).[168]

The state was very interested in otaining a fixed share of the produce. If the crops were poor owing to the owner's neglect, he was fined, which, as P.V. Kane puts it, does not signify the king's ownership of the land; it is an indication of his efforts to receive his share of taxes.[169] The *Arthaśāstra* (III. 10) states that, "if the owner of the field (*kṣetrika*) takes away the field or the tenant (*upavīsī*) leaves it at the time of sowing, the fine shall be twelve *paṇas*". It is noteworthy that both the former and the latter were subjected to the same punishment : the state was concerned, first and foremost, with the condition of the fields from which it levied its income.

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This also explains why tax-payers were forbidden to settle in villages which were exempted from taxes (*akaradagrāma*). Those who did so were fined. But if they moved to a village enjoying no privileged status, no pressure was brought to bear upon them *Arth.*, III. 10). Tax-payers were allowed to sell and mortgage land plots only to other tax-payers, while Brāhmaṇa owners of gift-lands, exempt from payments, only to similar Brāhmaṇa owners of gift-lands. In other words, the state took appropriate measures[170] to protect the rights of the latter and at the same to safeguard its own rights.

The state strove to ensure an uninterrupted inflow of taxes and, through special tax collectors (assistants of the chief tax collector—*samāhartṛ*), saw to it that the land tillers began to sow their plots in good time (*Arth.*, V. 2.8-11). It is in this context that we should consider the law forbidding villagers to become monks until they had provided for their families (*Arth.* II. 1). Even old people could become ascetics only with the judges' permission. Naturally, it was not the fate of the poorer villagers that Kauṭilya was concerned with; he strove to protect the state from possible losses : no tax was levied from ascetics, and villagers left without subsistence would be unable to give the treasury the required part of the crops. Was it not for this reason that Kauṭilya advised the king not to allow ascetics to come to villages ?

The right to levy taxes from a certain taxable unit could be conceded by the sovereign to individuals. In all probability, it is in this sense that we should interpret the data on the king's gifts of villages to monks and Brāhmaṇas.[171] An inscription by Queen Gotamī Balaśirī of the Sātavāhana dynasty tells, for instance, of the transfer of a *grāma* to the monks and of the renunciation of the right to levy taxes from it (*savajātubhoganiraṭhi*). The king could not dispose of a village at will if it was not situated on his own land, but he could concede the right to collect taxes which he enjoyed as the supreme ruler. The *Jātakas* mention gifts of villages to Brāhmaṇas, specifying the incomes received from these villages (III. 229).

The state, in the person of the ruler, had the monopoly to mine minerals and salt. According to Viṣṇu (III. 39), it owned all the produce of the mines. Some texts (for instance, the *Mānava Dharmaśāstra*, VIII. 35-39) inidicates that half the ancient hoards and metals were claimed. The king thus seems to have

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placed above the actual owners of land (private individuals and communities) and the state was entitled to special privileges which, though they extended only to "gifts of land", strengthened its claims to ownership.

The right of the king as the master (protector) of the land (soil) to enjoy its gifts (including collection of taxes) is testified by many ancient Indian sources, but, significantly, they distinguish this right from the ruler's right to dispose of land as a full owner, which he was not.[172] The latter right was purely nominal.[173] The king could not take away a plot of land for non-payment of taxes and he was not empowered to deprive a land owner of his rights (Bṛhaspati, XIX, 16-18); if he did so by taking advantage of his political power, such an action was regarded as illegal. Should the king, driven by avarice, resort to deceit, deprive a man of his land and hand it over to another person in token of his favour, such a gift is not recognised as lawful (XIX. 22).

The ruler was an absolute owner only of the royal lands (*savabhūmi*),[174] where the estates were located which, in the *Arthaśāstra*, were usually referred to as *sītā*.[175] Here, the king's power was unlimited and undisputed; he could give this land away, confiscate it, grant it for a definite period, etc.

Kauṭilya gives us an insight into the organisation of royal estates. A special official, "the Director of Agriculture" (*sītādhyakṣa*), was in charge of all affairs connected with agricultural activities.[176] Jointly with his assistants he supervised sowing, harvesting and irrigation, and saw to it that farm implements and draught animals were in good condition. His duties included supervising the work of the smiths, carpenters, navies, etc. Apparently, there lived on the royal estates crafts-men who were to supply all necessary tools and implements to the farmers.[177] They were paid in kind and in money.

The royal lands were tilled by slaves, hired labourers, (*karmakara*) and people paying off their fines by personal labour, as well as by tenant-farmers who received half of the produce (*ardhasītika*), and sharecroppers, whom the commentator Bhaṭṭasvāmin referred to as "living solely by personal labour" (*svavīrya-upajīvinaḥ*) and who received only a one-fourth[178] or one-fifth share or, indeed, some uncertain share fixed by the king. Tenant-farmers seem to have possessed implements of production, whereas the others are described by Bhaṭṭasvāmin as people having

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no seeds, oxen, agricultural implements, etc. The services of the latter two categories were used when slaves and *karmakaras* were unable to till the entire *sītā* land.

The status of the tenants (*ardhasītīka*)[179] who worked on royal estates differed essentially from that of the free members of the community who possessed their own plots, implements of production, and paid taxes (*bhāga*) to the king.[180]

Royal estates evidently did not occupy a contiguous tract of land but were scattered in different regions and could border on the lands of private owners and communities.[181] According to some data, the king was sometimes the owner of isolated plots inside villages.[182] In an inscription from Nasik,[183] Sirī Gotamiputra Sātakaṇi (Śrī Gautamīputra Sātakarṇī) orders a state official to give ascetics a royal field[184] in one of the *grāmas*. To endow this order with legal force, he orders that the gift should be officially registered. Another inscription from Nasik records that since a plot of land (*kheta*) given as a present to ascetics in a village is not tilled, the king takes it back,[185] but gives them a plot of 100 *nivartanas* (approximately 120 hectares) from his own land (*rājakaṃ kheta*).[186] From the inscriptions it is evident that not all land in the village was considered to be the king's own in these cases but only the plots (although quite large)[187] which the ruler could give away as their owner.

According to some scholars, the difference between royal and other lands can be traced also in the *Arthaśāstra*, which differentiates *sītā*, revenue from royal estates, and *bhāga*, revenue from lands not belonging to that category.[188] Collection of revenue from the royal land and control over it were entrusted to a special official, *sītādhyakṣa*, and collection of revenue from other lands was the job of a *samāhartṛ* (V. 2).

A large part of the land belonged to the state, which included woods, uncultivated fields, and waste land. The king, as head of state, set up new villages on uncultivated and deserted land, for one of the principles of state policy, as B.C. Sen correctly remarks, was to put to use all arable area.[189]

Kauṭilya recommended that these villages be settled with Śūdras (agriculturists, *śūdrakarṣakas*)[190] reckoning 100-500 families[191] on an area extending over one or two *krośas* (about 3.5-7 km).[192] From this we may deduce that the number of

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inhabitants in such villages was between 500 and 2,500 (assuming that on an average a family consisted of five persons).

The king gave to settlers (tax-payers) and officials of various ranks (accountants, *gopas*, *sthānikas*, messengers, etc.) plots without the right to sell or mortgage them (*vikrayādhānavarjāni*). These lands were given only for personal use[193] and could be taken away from those who failed to cultivate them. The state was thus trying to prevent those plots from becoming hereditary holdings. According to Kauṭilya (II. 1), in setting the new areas, the king granted land to "tax-payers" (*karada*) but only for their lifetime (*aikapuruṣikāṇi*),[194] which meant that the land-tillers did not become owners.[195] The plots of deceased tillers immediately reverted to the state, not to their heirs.

In newly developed areas, land was granted for temporary use to free tenant-farmers (*karada*—"paying the *kara*, tax").[196] It was primarily such tenant-farmers[197] and also Śūdras who tilled plots received from the state, thus becoming a kind of state tenants. In case of need, the king was to help them with grain, cattle and money, which they were obliged to pay back afterwards at their convenience. It is possible that some of them owned implements of production.

Judging by the *Arthaśāstra* evidence (II. 1), the ruler could give to preceptors, priests and Brāhmaṇas plots (*brahmadeyāni*) exempt from fines and taxes (*adaṇḍakarāṇi*)[198] and bringing an appropriate income.[199]

Such grants were made of uncultivated lands and their status differed from that of private owners' land. The state seems to have exempted the Brāhmaṇas from duties normally imposed on such owners and granted them an unrestricted right to use the produce received from these plots.[200] It should be noted that only some categories of Brāhmaṇa priests received such plots.[201] The king could also give land of the *brahmadeya* type from his own land (*rājabhoga*[202] . . . *rāja-dāyaṃ brahma-deyyaṃ*).[203] Evidence of the king's granting immunity rights appears as early as the Sātavāhana and Vākāṭaka inscriptions. For example, when giving his land, the king might also grant the right to mine salt on it. Cases are mentioned when the owner of a plot of land was granted the right to use pastures. There are also indications that this was sometimes accompanied by exemption from handing to the king pelts, charcoal, flowers, etc.[204] The state, in the person

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of the ruler, issued a special decree to fix these privileges for new owners.[205]

The data from inscriptions of the first half of the first millennium A.D. thus reflect new phenomena in social relations, stemming from the development of feudalism and feudal ownership.[206]

Unfortunately, there are practically no data on collective land-tenure including land-tenure by communities; there are also almost no data on cloistral land tenure.[207] Evidence from the *Jātakas*, the *Arthaśāstra* and later *Śāstras* indicates that in the period in question the rights to land were enjoyed by the community but it is difficult to specify the size of community lands and how they were managed. The *Arthaśāstra* (III. 9) mentions strictly-guarded boundaries between villages. The existence of boundary marks is important evidence of the right to the ownership of land enjoyed by individual communities.[208]

In the chapter (II. 35) dealing with the chief tax-collector's duties, Kauṭilya lists various kinds of taxable land in villages. In fixing the boundaries of a village, the tax-collector had to assess the area as a whole, taking into account arable and non-arable land, dry areas, orchards, irrigation works, and pastures, and register the boundaries between the plots belonging to individual owners and the communal land, which, evidently, comprised wood tracts, roads and pastures. Kauṭilya enumerates the main revenues and, along with the sixth part (*ṣaḍbhāga*)— the tax paid to the king by all husbandmen, the (*piṇḍakara*), which was, according to Bhaṭṭasvāmin's commentary, a common tax levied on villages.[209] Apparently, the community administration paid the king the taxes imposed on the communal lands. According to the *Arthaśāstra* (III. 10), members of the communities were liable to a fine, if they violated the regulations regarding these lands (including pastures, roads, etc.).

Interesting material has been found in a source dating from the 4th-5th centuries, the *Mīmāṁsā-sūtra* by Jaiminī, and more recent commentators.[210] Speaking about the things that a man can give away as his own, Jaiminī comes to the conclusion that land cannot be given away even by the king as it belongs to everybody (*na bhūmiḥ syātsarvānpratyaviśiṣṭatvāt*; VI. 7.3). In his *Mīmāṁsā-Darśana* the commentator Śabarasvāmin offers a detailed discussion of this matter and voices the opinion that all, including the king, enjoyed equal rights. The existence of this view and

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the lengthy discussions on this issue in Indian tradition are a clear proof that the community continued to play an important role and retained its right to land-ownership even in the post-Mauryan period.

The sources thus suggest a multiple pattern of land tenure in ancient India, where alongside state-owned and royal lands, there were private and communal ones. Megasthenes failed to understand this diversity of property patterns and believed that as the land-tillers paid taxes to the king, "all India was the property of the crown and no private person was permitted to own land" (Diodorus, II. 40.5). Strabo who also followed Megasthenes, writes that "the whole of the land is the property of the king and the husbandmen till the land on the condition of receiving one-fourth of the produce" (XV. 1.40). It seems likely that the land owned by Megasthenes, who lived in Pāṭaliputra, was none other than royal land, which could also be tilled by free tenants for a fixed rent.[211] This, probably, accounts for Strabo's statement that land-tillers only took a quarter of the yield for tilling land, which is in glaring contrast to the statement in other sources that the tax paid to the king amounted to a sixth or an eighth share. It is possible that Strabo actually spoke about tenants on royal lands who, judging by the *Arthaśāstra* (III. 24), received a quarter or a fifth of the produce.

Evidently the proportion of land under various forms of tenure changed in different historical epochs. It is difficult to determine the exact ratios, but the general trend can be gauged : it consisted in the growth of private and royal land ownership at the expense of community ownership. The concept of land as an object of property was also changing. The whole problem was treated differently in varying historical epochs and in different parts of the country.[212]

The existence of several forms of land ownership meant that one plot of land could be rightfully claimed by several owners at the same time, though the right of each was restricted. For instance, if mines were located on a private person's plot, they were considered state property, and if the owner was a member of a community, the latter also had a certain right to his land.

By collecting taxes from the free members of the community, the state, in the person of the king, protected their rights as private landowners and, along with the community, provided them the

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opportunity for enjoying those rights. At the same time the state regarded itself as the master of the entire land and strove to extend its rights at the expense of private individuals and whole communities. Throughout the history of ancient India, the struggle of these tendencies—state, private and communal—is clearly traceable.

The multiple pattern of land tenure was quite natural considering the relatively underdeveloped social relations in the period under study. The existence of a single form of land tenure would have hardly been possible in the light of the continuing importance of the communities, archaic institutions and traditions still existing alongside a strong state power, and the multiple elements present in the social structure of that period.

This conclusion is in conformity with the data of the sources and is more logically explained from a general theoretical standpoint. It is evidently valid for the Mauryan state. R. Thapar correctly remarks that the empire had become so vast and the levels of development of individual regions were so different that there is no ground to assume that there existed any single type of land ownership.[213]

The data from Greek and Indian sources presented above refer mostly to Magadha and the adjacent areas. It is there that the forms of state, royal and private land ownership were particularly widespread, although communal ownership of land was not altogether absent. It is there that the royal estates were concentrated and the king, as sovereign, could exert the greatest influence on land distribution. In regions of North-West India (regarding which interesting evidence has been left by the classical authors), where tribal traditions survived longer and the process of class formation and the emergence of large states were less intense, and the forms of communal land ownership were more tenacious.

3. Social Structure of Early India

The village Community in the Latter Half of the First Millennium B.C.

The character and role of the village community in ancient India is a complex and so inadequately investigated question, due both to the scarcity of data and to limited attention so far given

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to it by scholars.[214] Many aspects have so far remained obscure : the village community's status in specific historical periods, its internal administration, the structure of the families comprising it and even the terminology. The fact is, however, that in ancient India village community was one of the main components of the socio-economic structure.[215] As I. M. Dyakonov has correctly noted, "for the study of the socio-economic system in the ancient world the position of the free producer of material wealth is no less important than that of the slaves. It can even be said that in some respects the question of free members of ancient society is even more important."[216] In the latter half of the first millennium B.C. village communities constituted a considerable proportion of the Indian population, primarily free cultivators. Under the influence of socio-economic and political processess taking place in that period, the character and composition of the community and the relationship between it and the state were undergoing change. The communities developed at different levels and took on various forms in different areas of the country.[217] On the vast territory of the Mauryan empire there existed both primitive clans and village communities,[218] which emerged from clans or were formed by settlers who moved to vacant lands,[219] and in which property and social inequality could already be noticed. In the Ganges valley, village communities were the most widespread.

Students of the village community in ancient India often treat it as synonymous with what is called *grāma* (Pāli : *gāma*), i.e. "village" in the sources. The meaning of this term is very broad and identifying it with the community is rather conventional. This conclnsion is also warranted by the study of early Buddhist texts, in which this word is used to denote various types of social organisation. In a narrow sense, the village community was an association of villagers who enjoyed equal rights and were owners of land plots; in a broad sense, it meant a village which included certain other groups of population, but, like a community, existed as a self-governing unit. It is extremely difficult to say which sources refer to the former, and which to the latter.

Judging by the available data, a village community comprised a number of large patriarchal families, which were gradually disintegrating into individual ones. Buddhist texts contain evidence that a *grāma* had plots of lands allotted to such families.[220] Villages varied in size. In some texts (*J.*, 1.199), a Magadha

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village of thirty families[221] and *grāmas* of 500 or even 1,000 families are mentioned.

Each village was demarcated from the neighbouring ones by natural or artificial boundaries. Woods were so close to the tracts of arable lands that trees had to be cut down to expand land for crops. Land was highly valued; it is natural that disputes over boundaries between villages, as recorded in the sources, invariably attracted the attention of village community members.[222]

It is possible to reconstruct the general view of a *grāma*. Various public buildings were usually placed in the centre—the assembly hall and the village community administration buildings. The rest of the area was occupied by houses and structures owned by individual families (*kuṭī* in Pāṇini and in the Buddhist writings).[223] A *grāma* was surrounded by woods, pastures (*gocara*, Pāṇini, III.3.119), meadows, and cultivated (*sītya*, Pāṇini, IV.4.91) and uncultivated (*araṇya*, Pāṇini IV.4.91) fields. Cultivated fields were apparently surrounded by a clay wall[224] and guarded by watchmen.[225]

Arable areas included plots (*kṣetra*) of individual families and the common land. The latter also included pastures, where the cattle were grazed (*grāmya-paśu-saṅgha*, Pāṇini 1.2.73),[226] and, probably, orchards.[227] The *Mānava Dharmaśāstra* (VIII.237) state that a village must be surrounded by communal land (*parihāra*) of 100 *dhanuṣas*.

According to the *Jātakas* (1.193), communal property included irrigation works and roads, and maintenance of which was a common responsibility. (The control of irrigation works in private households was the owner's responsibility.) Kauṭilya reports (*Arth.*, II.35) that the chief tax-collector had the duty of taking stock, not only of the villagers' cultivated plots, but also of nonarable lands, pastures, and roads. Along with taxes raised from free villagers, a tax from whole villages[228] was levied. This also points to the existence of communal lands. According to the *Arthaśāstra* (III.10), "the village itself shall receive the penalty of a farmer who, after accepting (residence in) a village, does not do (his share) of work" (Kangle's translation). Obviously, such farmers (*karṣaka*, in the commentary this word is explained as *karmakara*) were invited to till communal fields; otherwise they would have been amenable to a private owner.

In the period under consideration, property and social

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contradictions had penetrated deep into the village, affecting its *varṇa* and class structure and the nature of the labour force. Free members of the community belonged mainly to the Vaiśya *varṇa* although residents of the *grāmas* set up by the king in newly-populated areas were for the most part *Śūdra* argiculturists (*Arth.*, II.1).[229] It should be noted that in the Mauryan period the Vaiśyas began to draw closer to the Śūdras, whose condition was somewhat improving.

The full members of the village communities mostly tilled their plots themselves, helped only by members of their family.[230] At the height of the farming season, those who were better off used the labour of *karmakaras* and evidently, slaves. According to the *Milindapāñho*, hired labourers (*bhaṭakas*, *kammakaras*) and slaves, both men and women, lived in every village. They were likely to have been in the service of the whole village community as well as of individual families. The former employed *karmakaras* to cultivate the communal field and paid them with money or foodstuffs. There were special officials hired by the village community to supervise the communal water reservoirs. Pāṇini (VI.3.60) knew of cleaners of village wells.[231]

The owners saw to it that the boundaries between their fields should not be violated, according to sources reporting boundary disputes;[232] however, an owner's rights were controlled by the village community, which evidently laid certain claims when necessary. The community's role in solving various problems, including that of land, was considerable. Judging by the *Śāstras*, it continued to be important even in a later period. The community tried to preserve its land and condition the sale of individual plots, especially in cases when the prospective purchaser was a "stranger", that is not a community member. When such transactions were made, priority, as has already been mentioned, was given to the relatives, then to the neighbours, creditors and finally to all others.

The community also opposed the partition of land plots, although, of course, it was unable to stem this natural process.[233] Kauṭilya declared that immovable property (evidently, first and foremost land) should not be liable to division after the head of the family had died and that the heirs were to use it without partitioning it (*Arth.*, III. 5).

Along with the agriculturists in a village, there lived craftsmen,

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who catered to the needs of the individual households and of the whole village community. Pāṇini mentions a special class of village craftsmen, *grāmaśilpin* (VI. 2.62), and also carpenters, *grāmatakṣā* (V.4.95).[234] The latter carried out orders, moving from one household to another. A carpenter of a higher rank possessed a workshop of his own. Patañjali (I. 1.1.48) mentions five categories of village craftsmen, enumerated by one of his commentators : potters (*kulāla*), smiths (*karmāra*), carpenters (*vardhakin*), barbers (*nāpita*), and laundresses (*rajaka*). Unfortunately, their status is unknown. One opinion is that they were given corn in payment for their work and were dependents of the village.[235] According to Pāṇini, some of the craftsmen were independent and fairly well-off. The combination of agriculture and handicrafts was a specific feature of the village community in ancient India.

In spite of the strong property and social variations within the village community in the period under consideration, it retained many features of a united, collective organisation, with common traditions and institutions.[236] To a great extent, this was facilitated by the collective work of villagers, including women : clearing roads, cutting down trees, building wells and assembly halls.[237] The community members were also united by the fact that they bore common expenses for grazing and protecting cattle, repair and maintenance of the irrigation works, etc. (*Arth.*, III. 10).

Religion was another cementing factor, for each village had a deity of its own. As a rule, its entire population attended religious ceremonies, festivities, community gatherings (*prekṣā*) and entertainments which were considered to be extremely important. According to the *Arthaśāstra* (III. 10), the village member should obey the orders of one, who told what was beneficial to all. A failure to comply was punished by a fine. Apparently, the village administrators saw to it that the residents did not shun these undertakings and brought in their share. It is possible that, in the first place, economic considerations determined the close attention given to such measures, which were a means of raising a communal fund. Only the Brāhmaṇas were not obliged to attend festivities, but they, too, were not exempt from giving a contribution (*Arth.*, III. 10). Members of the village community tried to preserve such traditions as consolidated its strength; the community championed

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their position, as it were, against the state's endeavours to bring them under a more rigid control and curtail their rights.

On many occasions, the village acted as a single unit in its relations with individuals, other villages and the state. In the *Mānava Dharmaśāstra* (VIII. 219-221), an agreement concluded between a village and a private person is cited and Bṛhaspati mentions agreements concluded between villages.[238] In fixing the taxes, the central authority regarded the *grāma* as a separate fiscal unit. Village community members were obliged to work for the king for a certain period every year. According to the *Dharmasūtras*, the king used (in the form of *viṣṭi*) the labour of craftsmen and agriculturists.[239] The commentator Bhaṭṭasvāmin notes that *grāma* residents helped build the state fortresses (*durga*),[240] although a free man could send *karmakaras* or slaves in his place. Villages of a special category were obliged to provide soldiers—*āyudhīya* (they are listed in the *Arthaśāstra*, 11.35—alongside villages which paid taxes).

Judging by the material available, in the latter half of the first millennium B.C., the *grāma* still retained its self-government. Free villagers attended assemblies and meetings,[241] at which internal village issues were discussed (for instance, irrigation, protection from robbers, exercise of religious rites) and at which some judiciary matters were evidently decided. An assembly was entitled to exile an objectionable person (a *Jātaka*, I. 239, for instance, refers to the expulsion of an astrologer, "an expert in lucky and unlucky times" [1.296], who was usually supported by all the residents), to admit new members to the village community, to punish a "novice" who had failed to fulfil the provisions of a contract or to do some work,[242] and to impose a fine for violating an established regulation and other misdemeanours. For instance, a private owner who took water from the communal reservoir was subject to the greatest fine (*Mānava Dharmaśāstra* IX. 281); for destroying an irrigation dam, he was punished by death) IX. 279).

In discussing such issues as the sale of land and boundary disputes, the elders' (*grāmavṛddha*) opinion was considered very important, for they played a significant role in community life (*Arth.*, III. 9). According to Kauṭilya, they took care of the property of minors until the latter came of age and also of the property of temples. Traditionally, the words of such highly respected persons had, as it were, the effect of law : they served as a

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guarantee of the inviolability of an agreement (*Arth.*, VII. 17). "Even in the matter of counsel, the legitimate over-reaches the wise through association with elders" (Kangle's translation). Sometimes elders acted as proxies. "In the absence of the creditor, the (debtor) may recover his pledge after deposing the redemption amount with village elders" (III. 12, Kangle's translation). There are reasons to believe that in the Mauryan epoch they formed a kind of council which made many important decisions (we know of this from the evidence of the Gupta period).

With time, the composition of the village assembly changed: instead of all full members of the community, only heads of families or households according to the *Milindapāñho*, *kuṭapurissa* came to be invited to it. The weakening of the democratic traditions is also reflected in the fact that the role of the village headman was strengthened. The post-Vedic texts that can, with some reservations, be used to judge the epoch in question, provide an outline of his role and basic functions, and enable us to trace the process of the transformation of the village headman into a hereditary representative of state power.[243]

In the sources, the headman is known by a variety of terms: *grāmabhojaka*, *grāmika*, *grāmādhipa*. In the latter half of the first millennium B.C., his office was no longer elective,[244] although in the preceding period he was elected by free village community members.[245] However, it is hardly likely that the situation was the same in all parts of the country. In some regions the older traditions may have still survived.

Gradually, the headman's chief function became the collection of taxes for the state. "What must be given to the king by the village residents every day—food, clothes, fuel, etc.—let it be collected by the village headman," the *Mānava Dharmaśāstra* states. He had not yet become a hereditary representative of the royal administration or hereditary owner of the village, but tendencies to that effect were already emerging and developing. It is noteworthy, in particular, that in the *Milindapāñho* he is named *grāmasāmiko*, "the master of the village". Under this name he is also mentioned in the *Arthaśāstra* (IV. 13). When the administrative functions had passed to him as well, he began to personify one of the lower units in the state administration. He was to ensure that law and order was maintained in the village and to report to the official superintendent of ten villages concerning all incidents

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and crimes committed (Manu, VII. 116). He was entitled to impose fines on the villagers. "Traders in caravans may stay inside the villages when their valuables are made known (to village officers). What is stolen or killed from among these the master of the village shall make good if it has not gone out at night. What is stolen or killed between villages, the superintendent of pastures shall make good. In regions without pastures, the officers for catching thieves (shall make good)" (*Arth.*, IV. 13; Kangle's translation).

Unfortunately, we do not know how the headman was compensated—whether he received part of the collection from the village or a salary paid by the state.[246] The *Mānava Dharmaśāstra* (VII. 119) indicates that he was granted certain rights to land (possibly revenues from a plot) : "let the superintendent of ten villages enjoy (*bhuñjitha*) one *kula*,[247] the superintendent of twenty villages, five *kulas* and the superintendent of a hundred villages, a village."

The headman of a *grāma* was not only a very influential person, but also a very wealthy one. In a *Jātaka* (II.135), a story is told of how he gave poor tenants an old ox and demanded that it should be paid for from the new harvest, that is, he acted as a creditor.

And yet the village had retained much of its self-administration. The headman had to respect the villagers' opinion and to call together the full community members to discuss major issues.[248] It should be said that as the influence of the village headman in the community grew, his role in the country's political life declined. While in the Vedic epoch he attended even coronation ceremonies, in the period when large states were emerging he represented the state's executive power only in his village.[249]

For a long time, when natural economy and poorly developed social relations prevailed, the ancient Indian village communities lived in isolation from one another and from the urban centres. Megasthenes also noted this when he wrote that tillers of land "never went to town" (Strabo, XV. 1.40). However, gradually the isolation of the community was broken, especially in the more developed areas. As the economy grew and the division of labour accelerated, commodity relations began to penetrate the economy. Contacts between villages and between them and the handicrafts

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and trade centres were being established. Villagers specialising in certain industries—smithery (*kammāragāma*), carpentry (*vaddhakigāma*),[250] salt mining (*loṇakagāma*),[251] etc. began to appear. Some of them took their produce to cities.

All this gave rise to sharp changes inside the village community. It was no longer a homogeneous unit : out of its full members, free agriculturists including the top segment of the village community had emerged, while, on the other hand, the segment of ruined community members had also grown. Deprived of land[252] and occasionally even of implements of production, they were forced to search for employment on royal and private estates or become tenants. In this way, the process of property divisions created new members for the lower segments of the village community, which made up the reserve force of the exploited groups.

4. Slave Labour and the Scope of its Employment
The Karmakaras

Over the past two decades, the problem of slavery in ancient India has attracted the attention of many scholars,[253] including Soviet historians.[254] A disagreement in their views on the role of slave labour has become manifest.[255] This divergence shows that further study of the problem must be conducted on the basis of a critical analysis of the sources and by examining this phenomenon in specific historical periods. G.F. Ilyin rightly notes that there can be no uniform answer to this problem which would apply to the whole of India : "Tribes and peoples lived in different natural conditions, created different economies and states, and developed at different rates. Therefore, a characteristic may be true of one region but not of another. Even within one and the same region, there existed natural economy and commodity production, tribal relations and civic society, and community and slave-holding economies. All this was further complicated by the existence of castes as well as social groups subject to exploitation that took forms dissimilar to the exploitation of the slaves (hired labourers, tenants, lower castes)."[256]

References to slaves and the use of slave labour occur as far back as Vedic and late Vedic literature,[257] but slavery became particularly pronounced in the latter half of the first millennium

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B.C. In the Mauryan epoch the first attempts to classify slaves were made, the condition under which they could be set free were specified and the rights of their owners were outlined in certain regulations, etc.

The statement of the *Majjhima-Nikāya* about the division of Indian society into free men (*ārya*) and slaves (*dāsa*), alongside the *varṇa* division, is well known.[258] The author of the Buddhist text thought this to express the specific character of ancient India. Besides, the text underlines that a slave could become a free man, and a free man a slave (*dāso hutvā ayyo hoti*).

In the same work and also in the *Dīgha-Nikāya* (II. 72), the status of a slave is described : "If a man is a slave, he is not his own master (*anattādhīno*), he is subordinated to others (*parādhīno*), and cannot go where he wishes. If he is freed of slavery, he becomes his own master, is not subordinated to others and can go wherever he wishes."[259] In his commentary, Buddhaghoṣa explains the term *anattādhīno* to mean that a slave cannot do anything on his own accord, and *parādhīno* to mean that the slave must obey another's will.[260] The commentator contrasts a slave with a free man (*bhujisso*), who is his own master (*attano santako*). Thus, at the time, one of the main characteristics of slavery was considered to be subordination to another, and dependence on his will.[261] This idea was further elaborated in later sources, the *Śāstras*.[262] The slaves were considered as a kind of commodity, they were treated as a sort of domestic animals, an object to be possessed along with precious metals, sandal wood, cattle and horses. Like cattle and other belongings, they were bequeathed and distributed between heirs[263], donated, mortgaged and sold.[264] The *Arthaśāstra* even fixes the rules for the sale of these "bipeds" (III. 15).

In the Buddhist and Jaina canons, slaves in the royal palace and the harem,[265] in the houses of wealthy townsmen[266] and villagers[267] are mentioned on numerous occasions.[268] That community members, too, had slaves is evident from references in Kauṭilya (II. 35). The district administrator was to report the number of slaves living in the individual village households. "He should record the number of villages by fixing their boundaries, the number of fields by an enumeration of ploughed and unploughed (fields), dry and wet fields, parks, vegetable gardens . . . and (keep records) of houses by an enumeration of tax-payers

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and non-tax-payers. And in them (he should record) so many are persons belonging to four varṇas, so many are farmers, cowherds, traders, artisans, labourers and slaves, so many are two-footed and four-footed creatures, and so much money, labour, duty and fines arise from them" (Kangle's translation).

The condition of the slaves was very hard indeed. The *Majjhima Nikāya* refers to slaves working out of fear of punishment ("their eyes were filled with tears"). The master of a slave woman who had awoken a little later than usual hit her with an iron doorbolt and broke her skull.[269] A runaway slave was caught and branded with a red-hot iron.[270] The owner of a slave could retain him at his will.[271] The *Mahāvastu* (I. 18) mentions slaves kept in fetters. According to most sources, slaves were forbidden to have any property.[272]

In assessing their status, both legal and actual (which need not always have been the same), it is necessary to distinguish between two types of slaves : life-long slaves (evidently for the most part they were either slaves born in the house or prisoners of war) and slaves for a specified period. While the former could never abandon their status of bondage, which was extended to their offspring, the latter (for instance, those pledged) could recover freedom under certain conditions.[273] Ancient Indians divided both groups into several categories (an attempt to classify them is reflected even in early Buddhist texts). For instance, the *Vinaya-Piṭaka* (IV. 224) lists slaves born in the house (*antojāta*), purchased slaves (*dhanakkīto*) and slaves brought from a foreign country (*karamarānīto*);[274] in the *Dīgha-Nikāya* (II. 35) a man is mentioned who became slave of his own free will (*sayaṃvāsavyam upagato*). These groups are referred to by Buddhaghoṣa when he explains the word *dāsa* (*tattha dāsa ti antojātakā va dhanakkīta vā karamarānitā va sayam dāsavyam upagatā*).[275] Four kinds of slaves are listed in the *Vidhurapaṇḍita Jātaka*[276] and three more subdivisions are mentioned in the other Jātakas.[277]

In all likelihood, the classified lists did not take into account all the possible cases where people were reduced to slavery : sources mention others not included in the preceding lists.[278]

Gradually, the classification of slaves became more and more notable. While in the Mānava *Dharmaśāstra* (VIII. 415)[279] nine kinds of slaves are mentioned, in Nārada there are as many as fifteen. The development of slavery is also shown by the elaboration

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of the methods by which the slaves could be emancipated. For the most part these related to temporary slaves, that is, slaves reduced to this status for a specified period (debtors, persons given in pledge, etc.[280] Their emancipation depended on their masters' will,[281] but, at the same time, could also take place after they had cleared off their debt by their work or when a ransom was paid for them.[282] The mode of emancipation was simple : the master sprinkled the slave's head with water and declared him to be free (*bhujissa adāsa*).

For a study of slavery in the period under study, it is fruitful to compare the data from the *Arthaśāstra* with those from other *Śāstras* and also with earlier Buddhist texts. Such comparison makes it possible to bring to light some essential features of slavery to make out the stand taken by various political and legislative schools and to trace the evolution of the views on slave labour and the status of slaves.[283] It should be borne in mind that the picture outlined in the *Śāstras* setting forth legislative rules is rather more ideal than real.

A comparison of Kauṭilya's treatise with the "laws" of Manu, Nārada and Yājñavalkya shows that it is in the later sources that more attention is given to the problem of slavery. This is apparently due to the fact that these sources were created in an epoch when feudal relations were already emerging, when the ideas of slavery and slave labour were undergoing changes, and when the issues of the emancipation of slaves and the status of temporary slaves, etc. were becoming particularly acute.

The approach to slavery in the *Arthaśāstra* is a practical one, determined by the need to protect the interests of the state's authority and free Āryas, including those temporarily enslaved. A special chapter in the treatise is concerned with slaves and *karmakaras* (*dāsakarmakarakalpa*, "a law concerning slaves and labourers", III.13). It is one of the first attempts at establishing the general norms regulating the status of slaves and the exploitation of their labour. It contains a list of categories for slaves, which is more detailed than those given in Buddhist literature. The difference between life-long slaves and temporary slaves is strictly fixed. In earlier sources this difference was not specially emphasised.

Kauṭilya draws a sharp borderline between Āryas and Mlecchas, and lists the kinds of punishment for reducing free members of the four *Varṇas* to slavery. "For one selling or keeping

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as a pledge a minor Ārya individual except a life-long slave,[284] the fine is twelve *paṇas* for a kinsman in the case of a Śūdra, double that in the case of a Vaiśya, three times in the case of a Kṣatriya, four times in the case of a Brāhmin.

For a stranger, the lowest, the middle and the highest fines[285] and death[286] are the punishment (respectively), also for purchasers and witnesses. It is not an offence for Mlecchas to sell an offspring or keep it as a pledge. But there shall be no slavery for an Ārya in any circumstances whatsoever" (Kangle's translation).

As set of rules was intended to protect a free man who had been reduced to temporary slavery under certain circumstances. "After keeping as a pledge an Ārya when the family has bound itself in times of distress of Āryas, they shall, on finding the redemption-amount, redeem first a minor or one who renders help" (Kangle's translation). "And he shall become an Ārya," Kauṭilya says, "by paying the price."

From an owner, who had not released a slave when offered an appropriate ransom, a fine of 12 *paṇas*, was to be levied. The same amount was to be paid by a person hindering the redemption. It was prohibited to re-engage a slave after he had been ransomed. Violation of this rule was fined by 12 *paṇas*. "If a person does not make a slave an Ārya for a suitable ransom, the fine is twelve *paṇas*, and confinement (for him) till he does it."

"If after ransoming a male or a female slave, a person again sells or pledges him, the fine is twelve *paṇas*, except in the case of those who themselves agree" (Kangle's translation).

All this makes it possible to believe that in Kauṭilya's time the power of the master over his pledge-slaves was to some extent limited[287] (it is probable, however, that these rules reflected the ideals of the author of the *Arthaśāstra* rather than the actual state of affairs).

The offspring of temporary slaves was considered free and could even receive the inheritance left by their father. "The offspring begotten by the master on his own female slave shall be known as free along with the mother" (Kangle's translation).

Coming out in support of people, who had fallen into temporary submission, Kauṭilya demands that they should not be entrusted with the dirty work which was not normally performed by free people (even Śūdras), "Making a pledge pick up a corpse, dung, urine or leavings of food, and making women (pledges) give bath

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to a naked person, giving corporal punishment to them and dishonouring them shall result in the loss of the capital." In later *Śāstras* this rule was revised.[288]

Some provisions referred directly to life-long slaves. In Buddhist literature they were treated as the owner's property and their destiny wholly depended on their master's will. The *Arthaśāstra*, however, placed certain restrictions on the slave-owner : "If one employs in vile work or in a foreign land a slave less than eight years of age, without kinsmen and unwilling (to do that work), from among any of the four types—(a slave) born in the house, received in inheritance, obtained (as a present) and purchased—or if one sells or pledges a female slave who is enceinte without providing for the nourishment of the foetus, the lowest fine for violence (shall be imposed), also on purchasers and witnesses" (Kangle's translation).

According to Buddhist sources, a prisoner of war, as has been mentioned above, was treated as a slave for livelihood. The *Arthaśāstra*, however, adds an elaboration designed to protect the free men. "An Ārya individual captured under the banner (*dhvajāhṛtaḥ*) should be freed by suitable work for a specified period or for half the price." Kauṭilya tried to prevent the unavoidable life-long slavery for prisoners of war (and thus their severing all ties with their mother country).[289] This was obviously the reason underlying the prohibition of taking a child slave away to foreign parts.

The authors of the later *Śāstras* are primarily concerned with protecting the interests of Brāhmaṇas, leaving the "slave's lot" to Śūdras. Moreover, according to Yājñavalkya, Viṣṇu and Kātyāyana, not only Śūdras and Vaiśyas but also Kṣatriyas could become slaves. This stand of Yājñavalkya and his followers shows the rules on slavery in an altogether new light.[290]

On the whole, Kauṭilya's treatise shows an effort on the part of the state to regulate the status of slaves, clarifying the issues and systematising all the related problems. A tendency to protect free men and to outline ways for emancipating those who had been reduced to temporary slavery is obvious. Kauṭilya's rules are also evidence of a greater role acquired by economic factors : even prisoners of war could be set free for an appropriate ransom.

In investigating slavery, the role played by slave labour and

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the proportion of slave labour in production are of prime importance. Available sources warrant the conclusion that it was employed in the main spheres of economic activity : agriculture (clearing woods, tilling fields, sowing, harvesting, tending cattle, etc.) and handicrafts. It has arleady been mentioned that, according to Kauṭilya (in the chapter, "Director of Agriculture"), slaves worked on the royal estates, while the *Jātakas* and Buddhaghoṣa[291] contain evidence to the effect that slaves worked on the state-owned lands of republican associations—evidently *gaṇas* (Koliyas and Śākyas).

From the Buddhist and Jaina sources we know about the employment of slave labour on private farms,[292] both agricultural and cattle-breeding. In the *Mahāvagga* (VI.34.2), a large farm is described, whose owner had a slave famous for his enormous strength : his plough cut seven furrows at once. In his commentary on the *Suttanipāta* (II.14), Buddhaghoṣa describes a big cattle-breeding farm (30,000 head of cattle including 27,000 milch cows), where slaves and labourers worked. Owners of medium-sized and small plots also used slaves, although these were, of course, not numerous (sometimes one or two). The same was done by communities (in all probability, they had some slaves at their disposal).[293]

Slave labour was also employed on monastery lands.[294] They could not be admitted to the *saṅgha* but they were included in the category of monastery servants (*ārāmikas*) or *kapyakārakas* (a group of a higher social standing), who tilled the land, harvested the crops, looked after the irrigation works, etc.[295] Evidence to this effect is particularly abundant in the post-Mauryan sources.[296]

According to Buddhaghoṣa, the word *ārāmikas* applied to various categories of dependent people (slaves and impoverished free men) who served the monks. He mentions that the king and some private persons donated to the *saṅgha* slaves (*dāsa*), "born in the house" and "bought."[297] Different categories of *ārāmikas* worked on varying terms : some were engaged every day either for the whole day or for half the day, while others were employed once every five days or even once every fortnight. For this they received food and grain.[298] Interesting evidence on monastery slaves is to be found in mediaeval commentaries.[299]

It should be noted that small farms had no particular need of slave labour. Moreover, this most troublesome kind of

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property, to use Plato's expression, called for very strict supervision. Slaves were more numerous on larger private farms, but even such farms found it more profitable to use hired labourers (*karmakaras*), who could be employed at the height of harvest time. Likewise, they were mostly used to till the plots granted out of the state lands to individual groups of Brāhmaṇas or provincial officials. Temporary tenants on state lands (*karada*) tilled their plots themselves. Even on royal estates, where supervision was no problem, slave labour did not predominate.

In the period under study, most farms which employed slave labour operated outside the market and every community was an economically independent unit supplying its members with all the necessities for normal life. However, some farms had already established links with the market, and the products obtained through slave labour were thus acquiring a commodity form.[300]

Judging by the sources, slaves were used in handicrafts, but their number was not large. In D.R. Chanana's opinion, this was due to the fact that craftsmen were unwilling to reveal to outsiders the secrets of their trade.[301] True, in the *Arthaśāstra* (II.23) it is reported that slaves worked at the king's textile manufactories.[302] There are similar references relating to private workshops.[303] Moreover, there are references to weaver slaves (*pesakāradāsa*) and dyers (*rajakadāsa*) working in monasteries.

However, on the whole, slave labour was not predominant either in agriculture or in handicrafts.[304] It could not compete with the labour of free community members and hired labourers of various categories. Evidently this was accounted for by the undeveloped nature of slavery in ancient India, where similar work was done by slaves and by free and half-free hired labourers[305] and where their actual status was similar.[306] In most ancient Indian texts—Brāhmaṇic, Buddhist and Jaina—the two groups of actual producers are often mentioned together.[307]

A formula constantly recurs describing labourers in various spheres of economic activity as *dāsakarmakara* (Pāli, *dāsakammakara*) "slaves and *karmakaras*".

The *Arthaśāstra* (II.24) sets down the rule for meeting out food to slaves, alongside gardeners, cowherds and *karmakaras*.[308] In Patañjali (III.1.26), slaves and *karmakaras* are mentioned together as persons working for food and clothes. They were distinguished from craftsmen who worked for pay.[309] Nārada (V.25)

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combines slaves and *karmakaras* together in one group, but remarks that the former do vile work and the latter clean work. According to the *Medhātithi* (commentary on *Mānava Dharmaśāstra* (VIII.415), the difference between slavery (*dāsyam*) and service (*paricaryā*) lies in the fact that slaves do "low" (*nikṛṣṭa*) work and have to perform it at any time.[310]

In other words, slaves were usually included in the same group as some categories of free labourers.[311] It can be presupposed that this was due to the conditions of work on royal estates[312] rather than to the peculiarities of slavery as a whole; however, the sources also contain evidence of an identical situation obtaining on private estates and in monasteries.

Sometimes slaves are mentioned together with *karmakaras* and servants (*pessā*)—*dāsapessakammakaras*. According to the commentary, the *pessā* received their pay before they began their work, and the *karmakaras* received their food and pay after work.[313] In the *Majjhima-Nikāya* (I.344), slaves, *karmakaras* and servants are generally described as people working under fear of punishment and as those whose speech and way of thinking were different from their masters' (I.430).[314] Moreover, Indian lexicographers sometimes drew no distinction between slaves and servants.[315] "Servants" (*bhṛtya*) sometimes denoted slaves, *karmakaras* and other labourers. D.R. Chanana noted that it is often impossible to distinguish whether this or that work was performed solely by slaves, because the terms "slaves" and "servants" are used loosely.[316]

In this context it would also be appropriate to recall the *ārāmikas* on monasterial estates. Slaves and various groups of free labourers (impoverished, deprived of the means of production, etc.) were grouped together in a single category of "monastery servants", which also seems to reflect the specific nature of ancient Indian slave-holding (true, it should be borne in mind that Buddhaghoṣa's commentary was written in the 5th century).

Many authors who have discussed the problem of slavery in general terms emphasise that slaves were mostly used in housekeeping.[317] Although this consisted many production processes, such as grinding grain, sorting out cotton and husking rice, spinning, weaving, repair and building work,[318] there is a strong case for this opinion. The wide use of slave labour for

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housekeeping was indeed a typical feature of ancient Indian slave ownership.[319] As G.F. Ilyin justly remarked, "the main sphere where slave labour was employed was housework."[320] Sources contain numerous data on the types of work done.[321] There is even a special term denoting house slaves—*ghara-dāsa, gehadāsī*. In commenting on the *Mānava Dharmaśāstra* (IX.143), the *Medhātithi* included in this group cooks, washers and valets (*prasādhaka*).[322] The *Jātakas* mention that slaves, men and women, were used to carry food to their masters working in the field.[323] According to G.F. Ilyin, such instances prove that "Indians often referred to work in the field or in the work-shop,"[324] but this can also be interpreted as a proof that slave labour was employed in the household where it was easy for members of the family to supervise them.

There are interesting references in the Buddhist sources that sometimes slaves were sent to work for money but they had to bring their earnings to their master. It appears that in many cases their upkeep in the house involved considerable expense.[325]

Authors from various countries have time and again pointed to the patriarchal nature of slavery in ancient India. This feature becomes particularly manifest, when Indian sources are compared with the well-known data on slavery in ancient Greece and Rome. "The primitive forms of slavery, which are often defined in literature as patriarchal slavery, survived up to the emergence of the feudal formation and probably even longer."[326]

Alongside instances of the cruel treatment of slaves, sources contain a lot of evidence to the contrary.[327] Sometimes "the position of slaves hardly differed from that of the other house menials and even from the junior members of the family."[328] The patriarchal pattern of relations between master and slave was due to the specific features of slavery in ancient India. It is in this light that references to slaves as having families, property, etc. can be interpreted.[329]

It is possible that these were the features of ancient Indian slavery which gave Megasthenes grounds to assert that "all the Indians are free, and not one of them is a slave."[330] Megasthenes (rendered by Arrian) further says, "In this lies the similarity between the Lacedaemonians and the Indians. But the Lacedaemonians' slaves are the Helots who do what is fit for slaves to do; with the Indians, contrariwise, no one else is a slave,

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let alone an Indian." This statement was called into question even in ancient times[331] and, although it is used by present-day scholars as an argument to prove the occasional character of slavery in India,[332] ancient Indian writings contain proofs to the contrary. The concluding words of the statement can be viewed from a different standpoint by comparing it with Kauṭilya's words : "But there shall be no slavery (*dāsabhāva*) for an Ārya in any circumstances whatsoever." It is tempting to think that, when he spoke about the absence of slavery in India, Megasthenes meant that there were only limitations to reducing free men to life-long slavery. Such practices existed in Candragupta's time and were reflected later in the *Arthaśāstra.*

In the Mauryan age, a great diversity of social patterns existed in India. In some areas, tribal relations still prevailed, and it is possible that Megasthenes' evidence applied only to one of the areas which he visited on his way to the capital or with which he became acquainted later during his stay in India.[333]

In the epoch under consideration, slavery was already widespread and had a major role to play, especially in the developed regions of the Mauryan empire. Most of the references in Buddhist and Jaina literature about the employment of slaves in farming households, in cattle-raising and in handicrafts relate to the Ganges Valley. It is in respect of the central regions of the empire—Magadha and the adjacent areas—that one can speak of slavery as a pattern which, along with the community, exerted a tangible influence on the social structure.

Scholars often compare slavery in ancient India with that in Greece and Rome, considering the latter two as a "kind of standard."[334] A comparison of this kind is rather nominal. We judge classical slavery only by some centres of the ancient world, which could have been deviations from the norm and the general line of evolution, rather than the rule.[335]

Along with community members and slaves, hired labourers[336] (usually called *karmakara* Pāli *kammakara*)[337] were an important group who were immediate producers of material wealth.

Large households were in great need of hired labour, particularly at sowing and harvesting times. Free members of the community, who were owners of smaller plots, tilled their land themselves, but they, too, needed extra hands in some seasons.

Data on *karmakaras* are much more voluminous than those

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on slaves, although the two categories are often used indiscriminately. In G.F. Ilyin's opinion, this "is accounted, for not by the prevalent role of hired labour as against slave labour, but by the fact that hired labourers remained subjects of the law, while slaves had no legal capacity and relations between them and the owner were determined by the latter's discretion."[338] However, as E.M. Medvedev justly noted, "most referenccs to *karmakaras* as *bhṛtakas* had nothing to do with the legal relations between the hirer and the hired."[339] Besides, *karmakaras* are often mentioned, not by so-called juridical *Śāstras*, but by Buddhist sources in stories about everyday life.

Judging from available evidence, the scope of the employment of hired labour was quite broad. According to the *Arthaśastra* (II.24), they worked on royal farming estates (along with slaves and those "paying off their fines by personal labour"). A special "Director of Agriculture" was charged with ensuring that those working did not encounter obstacles like the disrepair of farm implements and tools and the absence of draught animals. "He causes them to be sown in land, suitable for each, which has been ploughed many times, through serfs (slaves), labourers and persons paying off their fines by personal labour. And he should cause no delay in [the work of] these on account of ploughing machines, implements and bullocks, and on account of the work of artisans, such as smiths, carpenters, basket-makers, rope-makers, snake-catchers and others" (Kangle's translation). Royal stock farms hired herdsmen, milkers and buttermen for money.

In the chapter "Settlement of the Countryside" (II.1), Kauṭilya advised the king to settle new lands by Śūdra agriculturists (*Śūdrakarṣaka*). They were allotted vacant plots from the state lands. In R.S. Sharma's opinion, these settlers had the status of temporary peasants,[340] but it is possible to suppose that they were hired labourers or dependent tenants employed by the state for a fixed period to till uncultivable land. In the commentary on the text (III.13), *karṣaka* is explained as *karmakara*.

As a rule, Śūdras possessed no plots, of their own and were hired as labourers to work in other households. That their labour was extensively used in agriculture is borne out by the fact that the *Majjhima-Nikāya* (II.180) makes a point of defining a Śūdra's duties : he works with the sickle and carries grain.

In the *Āpastamba* (II.11.28.2), a farmworker, *kīnaśa*, who

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cultivated land plots, is mentioned.[341] Asahāya Nārada's commentator, interpreted the term *kīnaśa* as Śūdra.[342]

The community members who had lost their land (but sometimes retained their implements of production and their house) and who were compelled to offer their services to neighbours or to owners of large estates joined the *karmakaras*. The *Mahāvagga* mentions a private estate, where slaves and *karmakaras* worked.[343]

The *Arthaśāstra* (III.13) reports that hired labourers were sometimes employed on private agricultural and stock farms and were paid in kind.

In his commentary on the *Saṃyutta-Nikāya* (I.172), Buddhaghoṣa describes the ceremony dedicated to the beginning of ploughing on a Brahman's estate. Five hundred festively dressed tillers of land (*kassakapurisa*)[344] entered the field. Some of them ploughed land (*ekeko kasati*), others scattered seeds (*ekeko vapati*). It is remarkable that the text makes no mention of slaves.

Sources contain other data on the employment of *karmakaras* in private households (in monarchies and republics).[345] Professional land tillers are mentioned among these (*kasiṃ katva jīvikaṃ kappentassa*).[346] Many of them worked merely for a daily pittance.[347] It is interesting that Buddhaghoṣa interpreted *karmakara* as those "who are supplied with food in payment for work" (*kammakara ti bhattavetanabhatā*).[318]

Karmakaras toiled on community members' plots and the farms they were employed on were to be made known to the neighbours. It is possible that this rule was intended to prevent all kinds of violence and to prevent concentration of labourers at the height of harvest-time in some households to the detriment of others. According to the *Arthaśāstra* (II.1), hired labour was used for the construction of irrigation work : "Instead of a man who evades work with the others to build an irrigation unit his karmakaras and bullocks must do [this] work." Data from Kauṭilya's treaties (III.13) also show that *karmakaras* tilled communal lands, etc.

They were also employed in monasteries.[349] One group of monasterial labourers, *bhikkhubhatikas*, is mentioned by Buddhaghoṣa (*Pap.*, III.8). According to him, they worked for the *vihāra* and "lived at the monks' expense".

Hired labour was also employed in handicrafts—in royal[350] and private workshops,[351] in trade,[352] and in house-keeping.[353]

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In other words, it was used extensively in various spheres or production. All this leads one to believe that "hired labourers played no lesser a role in the economy than slaves",[354] and possibly even a greater one. There are grounds to suppose that because many people (primarily impoverished Śūdras) were willing to do any work on any terms and in any season, this was one of the factors accounting for the limited use of slaves, particularly in land husbandry. Many *karmakaras* possessed their own implements and dwellings. Naturally, the owner of a small plot would find it more profitable to fall back upon their service than to buy a slave, provide him with all the necessary tools, housing and food, and to supervise his work.

The terms of hire of the *karmakaras* and other groups as well as their duites were often stipulated by a contract concluded between them (as individuals or corporations) and their employers. Sometimes the contract was signed in the presence of witnesses.[355]

As a rule, labourers were hired for a limited period ranging from one day, to one year,[356] and mostly for one season. The amount and form of payment were stipulated in the contract or, in the absence of one, depended on the time spent and, evidently, on the kind and place of work. According to the *Arthaśāstra* (III.13), in the absence of a special contract, the labourers were remunerated as follows : "A cultivator, a cowhered [and] a trader should receive one-tenth part of the crops, of butter (and) of the goods dealt with by them (respectively) if the wage is not agreed upon. But if the wage is agreed upon, then as agreed upon" (Kangle's translation). The *karmakaras* who worked on the royal land received food and a small wage. The amount of this wage compared with the salaries of royal officials and civil servants was extremely small (not more than 1.25 *paṇas*). True, Patañjali (V.4.116) mentions a category of labourers who were in a much better position and received 5-6 or even 10 *kārṣāpaṇas* (*pañcaka-māṣikaḥ, ṣaṭka-māṣikaḥ, daśaka-māṣikaḥ*).

Contracts failed to protect the *karmakaras* from their owner's arbitrariness. Kauṭilya reports (II.14) that the employer could refuse to accept the work done by his *karmakaras* if he thought it had been done not fast or not well enough. According to Yājñavalkya (II.195), the master could do what he wanted with a hired labourer who had failed to do his work on time and thus violated his obligations. In the *Āpastamba* (XI.2.28) we read

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that the master could beat a labourer who had failed to till the plot of land (*avasinaḥ kīnaśasya karmanyāse daṇḍatāḍanam*). The *Śāstras* specify the regulations concerning fining the *karmakaras* and depriving them of their wages. True, the employer was also liable to a fine for failure to comply with the provisions of the contract, but according to the evidence of the *Arthaśāstra* (III.13), the "measure of punishment" of the employer was incomparably lighter. It is known that fines exacted, for instance, from *karmakaras* working on royal estates reached 12 *paṇas*.

In general, the plight of a large number or hired labourers was very hard indeed. Since for the majority of them belonged to the lowest caste, the *varṇa* of the *Śūdras*, they could not hope for favourable terms of contract.[357] Life was particularly hard for those who worked as farm hands through out their life. They ate the same food as the slaves. As Kauṭilya writes (V.2), what remained after gathering in the crops was to be left for the benefit of beggars and village servants. During the period when they worked on private estates and in the households of well-off landowners and *seṭṭhas*, *karmakaras*, like slaves, were wholly dependent on their master's will[358] and, like slaves, were given barley gruel for food.[359] In one of the *Jātakas* (I.341), they are listed alongside cattle as their owner's property.

One may argue from this that in fact hired labourers often "constituted a social group half-way between the free men and slaves."[360] Their freedom was largely illusory.[361]

5. Some General Remarks

The preceding data was indicative of the varied structure of ancient Indian society and reveal the specific feature of the way in which India's class society developed. As regards the Mauryan epoch, it seems justified to assume the existence of primitive, communal and slave-owning structures, even though their respective roles and introduction must have been different in various regions of the country. In the more developed regions - Magadha and the neighbouring areas—slavery was widespread, whereas in some of the more outlying regions the tribal system still prevailed.

The communal, or petty natural socio-economic structure, which had grown out of the primitive tribal systems and was

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closely linked with them, held an important place. In the epoch under consideration it was probably not a mere survival of the tribal system or an element of the primitive communal system, as some authors postulate,[362] but existed as a special type of social economy, which determined the way of life of the class concerned.[363] Members of the community appear to have been the key figures in land husbandry, the main branch of economy in which most of the population was engaged. The free members of the community, owners of land plots and implements of production were the main producers of material wealth.[364]

The ancient Indian village community, based primarily on a natural economy, restricted the development of slavery : the owners of small land plots did not need the labour of a large number of slaves. However, it was already pregnant with elements of antagonistic relations, for it contained contradictions between the well-off top segment and the exploited lower strata of the village community which had become more clearly pronounced.[365]

The multiple structure of Indian society was also vividly shown in the involved pattern of people gainfully employed and in the simultaneous development of the different forms of dependence (each with a different pace and scope). Apart from slaves, hired labourers, formally free but often living in a state of semi-bondage, were widely employed in all spheres of economic activity, and various groups of tenants were involved in land husbandry. The existence of various categories of hired labourers limited the scope for employing slaves.

Indian history shows quite clearly the trends typical of ancient class societies—the exploiters depriving the immediate producers of their property and even attempting to appropriate their very personality. Both the state and the big private owners tried to expand the scope of exploitation and to encompass ever greater sections of impoverished community members and others within it. The economic structure of the ancient society depended on direct relations of domination and subordination.[366] Although the slaves were not the sole exploited group, slavery was the predominant form of exploitation.[367] Although it did not contribute the basis of the economy, it influenced all aspects of life and, as we have seen, was penetrating the village community and undermining its inner unity.

It should be noted that the multiple pattern of the social

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structure, an inherent feature of every ancient society which had outgrown the primitive community,[368] was not, however, a mere sum-total or merger of structures, but an involved intertwinement of their elements, often giving rise to a real tangle of social relations. Thus, in the Mauryan epoch the primitive community structures were waning and decaying while slavery was being strengthened. This was expressed in particular in, the growth of the state-owned and large private estates, where, to the detriment of the village community, slave labour was employed on a fairly large scale. A comparison between the pre-Mauryan and Mauryan epochs shows a growth of slave labour in the latter. These features were inherent in the mode of production, the peculiar Indian path of development of ancient class society.[369] It is appropriate to emphasise once more the simultaneous existence of a number of different structures in Mauryan India. Some of these were class societies, others were still at the level of the tribal system, while still others were in the process of transition from the pre-class formation to various types of secondary class formations including, evidently, feudalism.

Sources analysed above refer primarily to the more developed areas of the empire; therefore, the conclusions they allow are only applicable to other regions with reservations. Moreover, in the better studied regions, a variety of social and economic structures was observed with an involved pattern of relations between classes, social strata and social groups.

Karl Marx wrote that "the same economic basis—the same from the standpoint of its main conditions—due to innumerable different empirical circumstances, natural environment, racial relations, external historical influences, etc. . ." may show "infinite variations and gradations in appearance."[370] It would be "unjustified pedantry" to determine with the precision of an apothecary where one relation ends, and another, giving rise to a new class, begins.[371]

When in the middle of the first millennium A.D. feudal relations were beginning to take shape in India, the other structures had undergone a drastic change and had begun to play a new role, even though they continued to exert considerable influence on the socio-economic structure and the political organisation of society. Later, at the time when feudalism had become predominant, a feudal guise was assumed even by those relations that were remote,

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in essence, from feudalism.[372]

While noting the multiple pattern of early Indian society, some authors point out the existence of a feudal structure[373] and feudal relations[374] in early period. In 1929, arguments to that effect were advanced by the Indian scholar, Pran Nath.[375] However, his arguments were subjected to drastic criticism. At present most Soviet and other scholars[376] date the formation of feudal relations in India from the middle of the first millennium A.D.[377] although some authors admit that feudalism had existed there even in the 5th-1st centuries B.C. E.M. Medvedev, for instance, writes (with regard to this epoch) that "there are no grounds for assuming that they (slave-owning relations) prevailed over feudal ones.[378] He also writes, "Many similar facts of socio-economic history are differently assessed by scholars studying the ancient epoch, on the one hand, and those concerned with the Middle Ages, on the other."[379] However, this statement is not altogether factual, for the later group of scholars are far from unanimous. For example, K.Z. Ashrafyan adheres to the view that some elements of feudal relations began to take shape in the 1st century, A.D.,[380] which agrees with the view of the students of ancient India.[381]

The exponents of the view that feudalism existed in early India are inclined to regard the land tax, which was collected by the state from agriculturists who were members of village communities, as a feudal rent. In their opinion, this tax "was about the usual size of the feudal rent so that it can be rightly called a feudal rent-tax".[382] In this they base themselves on the assumption that the state held a monopoly of land ownership in early India and exploited village community members by levying this rent-tax.[383]

However, as has been shown above, the state was not the absolute owner of all arable land in the Mauryan period; therefore, it is incorrect to treat the land tax in its entirety as a rent-tax. It was only on the state and royal lands, where the state acted as the owner, that the tax paid by the tenants was actually identical with rent.[384] K.Z. Ashrafyan emphasises the qualitative difference in the relations between the state and the agriculturists in early Indian states, on the one hand, and in [feudal society, on the other. She notes that, "tax as such does not make land the property of the recipient of the tax".[385]

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As to the identical values of the land tax in early India and the feudal rent in later epochs, this fact, though interesting in itself, hardly reveals the nature of the relations of production (besides, taxes raised in different periods and in different regions of early India varied).

It is also necessary to take into account the character of the tax itself. It did not depend on the size of the land plots but was, in fact, an imposition on the crops. A tax of the same amount (but, naturally, in a different form) was levied from artisans and traders. The main principle here was not any fixed rate of tax on land and landowners but a fixed part of the proceeds of their labour. The character of the land tax is determined by the nature of land ownership. This seems to provide an answer to E.M. Medvedev's remark alleging that "it is impossible to understand what distinguished the land tax in ancient times from the mediaeval tax".[386]

As some scholars of Indian studies maintain, there is "every reason to believe that village-community members were exploited;[387] and that in early society, feudal relations existed "in the form of the private and collective exploitation of the land tillers",[388] which was practised by the fiscal machinery of the state.[389] "Feudal exploitation," E.M. Medvedev writes, "emerges as exploitation by the state, springing from the execution of duties disguised as a 'salary' (*bhṛti*) paid to the king for protection against enemies."[390]

A different view is held by G.F. Ilyin, I.M. Dyakonov and some other scholars. "Taxation," G.F. Ilyin remarks, "cannot be treated as direct exploitation (appropriation of an other man's labour by the owner of the implements of production)."[391] For a long time village community members remained free labourers, not subject to any direct exploitation, since most of them were the owners of the means of production they used."[392]

The tenants, who lived on the king's land and were obliged to carry out duties for the king and the land tillers, who had received their plots from the state-owned land and paid special taxes, were the only categories of the population subject to direct exploitation.

Once the view that the state had the monopoly of land ownership and, consequently, the interpretation of the land tax as a feudal rent are discarded, the very idea of the group

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exploitation of agriculturists in the form of feudal relations becomes unconvincing. Even if one assumes that levying a land tax is tantamount to exploitation of free members of the village community possessing the means of production, one can hardly regard levying this tax (in the pre-Mauryan and Mauryan periods) as *feudal* exploitation. Small and middle land-owners running their independent farms and paying taxes and carrying out obligations to the state did not, by that fact alone, become state-dependent peasants, for the payment of taxes is no proof of the state ownership of all arable land.[393]

Exploitation (in the true sense of the word) exists only when the owner of the means of production appropriates another man's labour. This basic (G.F. Ilyin calls it "direct") exploitation was practised in Mauryan India by the state (the king) when it was the owner of the means of production and appropriated part of the surplus product from direct producers.

However, it is indisputable that in a class society, the state (personified by the king as the sovereign of the territory, the incarnation of public power and the instrument of suppression) exerts pressure on the toiling masses, in an attempt to appropriate part of their necessary product even when it does not own the means of production. Under certain conditions, the king could double the tax quota.

Taxes were a heavy burden on the Vaiśyas, the free agriculturists and handicraftsmen, since the Brāhmaṇas and the Kṣatriyas were often exempted from taxes, and those Śūdras who did not possess land were not included in the group of payers of the king's share.

The exponents of the view that early India had a feudal structure, refer to the existing "private feudal land tenure represented by the forms of complete and incomplete private feudal property"[394]—the main types of feudal land tenure found in mediaeval India.[395] They also point to the evidence of the *Arthaśāstra*, the *Mānava Dharmaśāstra*, and the later *śāstras* (for example, the *Viṣṇu-Smṛti*). However, first of all, the dating of these texts must be taken into account. It has already been mentioned that they took shape in the first centuries A.D. and, therefore, they reflect certain features of the new period, a period in which feudal relations were already emerging. Even the presence in the *Śāstras* of some evidence that can be interpreted

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from "the standpoint of the exponents of feudalism" seems to us to point to the beginning of feudalisation rather than to the continuing development of the feudal relations which supposedly had emerged in antiquity.

Ancient sources (including those related to the Mauryan epoch : the Buddhist texts, *Dharmasūtras*) contain numerous references to private land ownership and private land estates.[396] But it is only from the first centuries A.D. that their conversion into estates of a feudal type can be traced.[397] It was at that time that the feudal relations were taking shape, which were to become predominant in or even after the middle of the first millennium.

In some ancient Indian texts, there are references to the king giving villages as gifts. Such grants are sometimes regarded as feudal-type landed estates.[398] However, the sources (and commentaries on them) emphasise that what is meant by "donation" is merely the transfer of the right to collect the tax from the village and not the right to land as such.[399] Some later inscriptions stated specially that the villagers were to pay to Brāhmaṇas on whom the village had been bestowed the taxes which they had previously paid to the state. The person for whose benefit the tax was collected was thus changed, but neither the size of the tax nor the status of the residents. It is noteworthy that in a "donation settlement" the amount of land and the number of peasants were never specified; there were no personal relations between the latter and the recipient of the gift.[400] As N.N. Kher justly remarks, "the royal benefactors granted to the Buddhist monks a privilege to enjoy such immunities. There is, however, nothing to suggest that the state relinquished the proprietary rights of the lands donated to them."[401]

A passage from the *Arthaśāstra* is often quoted stating that : "He (the king) should grant (lands) to priests, preceptors, chaplains and learned Brāhmaṇas land (as) gifts to Brāhmaṇas (*brahmadeyāni*), exempt from fines and taxes (*adaṇḍakarāṇi*) and yielding suitable (revenue)" (II.1). It should be kept in mind, however, that this passage is in the chapter prescribing the procedure for settling vacant land, which was considered to be owned by the state. The Brāhmaṇas who received such plots did not become their owners but were merely exempt from the obligations normally imposed on temporary tenants of such plots. Judging by the text, this privilege was not enjoyed by all Brāhmaṇas but only by

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some categories: Śrotriyas, Purohitas, etc.[402] According to Kauṭilya, these Brāhmaṇas could not sell or mortgage the plots to members of other *varṇas*. As N.N. Kher remarks, "It is obvious that the state was mindful of the loss of revenue by their frequent alienations to others. In this sense, they were not absolute owners of such lands possessing full rights of gift, sale and transfer, etc".[403] "The Brāhmaṇas," he goes on to say, "were owners or landlords to the extent of enjoying only the revenues of the land granted to them which were formerly claimed by the King or his officials."[404]

It is noteworthy that in inscriptions of the Brāhmaṇas who received plots of land (*brahmadeya*) are referred to as users (*bhojakas*) in the sense that they were granted land for "enjoyment", but not as owners with full proprietary rights. Some scholars believe and not without reason, that exemption from taxes on land granted to Brāhmaṇas (*brahmadeya*) is observed only in the period when the *Arthaśāstra* was recorded. The early Pāli texts carry no evidence as to their receiving any administrative rights or even exemption from taxes.[405]

From the epigraphs of the Sātavāhana epoch, it is clear that the king could donate small plots from his own lands to Brāhmaṇas and followers of other creeds. If there was no vacant land, he had to buy land from a private owner and then could dispose of it at his own discretion.[406]

Judging by the data in the Sātavāhana epigraphs, some rights began to be granted in the Deccan in the 2nd century and in North India even later.[407] Compared with Kauṭilya's evidence, only the Gupta texts show that *brahmadeya* was linked with some administrative rights.[408] In that period, granting various rights was already associated with the beginning of feudalisation.[409]

Let us consider once again the data that are usually cited to substantiate the conclusion that feudal relations existed in early India. In the Mānava Dharmaśāstra (VII.115-119), it is stated that a headman should be appointed for each village, a superintendent for ten villages, and other categories of superintendents for units of twenty, on hundred and a thousand villages. The *Mānava Dharmaśāstra* also enjoins that the superintendent of ten villages use one *kula* (of land);[410] that of twenty, five *kulas*; and that of a hundred villages, one village; and the superintendent of a thousand villages, a town" (a similar statement is contained in the *Viṣṇu-*

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Smṛti, III.7-10). The text refers only to local provincial administration; the central authorities were apparently remunerated from the treasury.[411]

In the *Mānava Dharmaśāstra* (VII.125-126) it is also stated that lower officials in the royal service were to receive a monthly salary in money (1 *paṇa* in all) and in grain (1 *droṇa* in all), and the higher ranks, sixfold of that.

This system of grants "in itself is not evidence of feudal relations, for there are no grounds to believe that the land became the grantee's property or that the residents of these villages and towns became personally dependent on him."[412] As N.N. Kher justly writes : "There is nothing to show that the state lost its hold over the land granted to the grantees."[413] However, this practice favoured the emergence of such relations. As to the farming-out of offices, it was not, as Karl Marx notes, purely feudal, as proved by Rome.[414]

Studies of the early Indian socio-economic system justifiably draw attention to the passage in the *Arthaśāstra* concerning land grants to state servants (II.1).[415] When settling new areas, i.e., the state-owned lands, the king was advised to give plots to provincial officials of various ranks "without the right to sell or mortgage" (*vikrayādhānavarjāṇi*). It is to be assumed that such plots were given only in developing new areas and that this was not a general practice. Kauṭilya's evidence is similar to that in the *Mānava Dharmaśāstra*. It refers only to some classes of officials and does not imply that all of them received land or the right to collect taxes from villages. Other passages in the *Arthaśāstra* (V.3) suggest that granting land to state officials only took place in isolated cases, "If the king has a small treasury, he shall give forest produce, cattle and fields and small sums of money. If he has undertaken the settling of new lands, he should give only money, not a village." Such grants were temporary and they were given for the time of service without the right to sell or mortgage. It is very important that the grantee did not receive any administrative rights to it.[416] He merely enjoyed the gift of the land, and this, according to Kangle, by no means suggests any feudal relations.[417]

Unlike the land granted to officials, the land given to Brāhmaṇas, according to Kangle's interpretation, could be inherited (evidently, these privileges were not enjoyed by all Brāhmaṇas

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but only those categories listed in the (*Arthaśāstra*). The existence of plots owned by Brāhmaṇas who were entitled to bequeath their land may be evidence of the emergence of feudal-type relations in the epoch when the *Arthaśāstra* was compiled.[418]

According to the *Arthaśāstra*, state servants were usually given a rigidly fixed salary in cash and sometimes a small extra amount of grain.[419] Any tangible changes in their remuneration did not occur until the 5th-6th centuries A.D.,[420] when the emergence of feudalism was already recognisable.[421]

In our view, the data discussed above do not provide sufficient grounds for asserting that "feudal relations played an important part"[422] as early as the 6th-1st centuries B.C. (that is, in the epoch preceding the recording of the *Arthaśāstra* and most of the *Śāstras*).

In his article 'Feodalniye otnosheniya v drevney i srednevekovoi Indii' (Feudal relations in early and Mediaeval India) E.M. Medvedev draws a distinction between the feudal relations of the antiquity and the mediaeval or "classical" feudal relations. He believes the former to have emerged slowly from tribal relations whose imprint they retained for a long time. On the whole, private feudal exploitation was very limited in the antiquity and had not yet acquired all its classical attributes. According to the outline sketched by Medvedev, "From the beginning of the Christian era, slavery gradually ceased to exist and feudal exploitation by the state was eroded by private feudal property. In the 5th-6th centuries A.D. this process led to the emergence of a feudal formation of a mediaeval type, more closely conforming to the logical model.[423] First of all, the criterion underlying this construct—the slow emergence of feudal relations from the tribal ones—looks debatable. In fact, it is the nature of property that determines the social structure. It has been rightly pointed out, "The assumption that elements of feudalism appeared in the final period of the primitive society leads to the identification of patriarchalism with feudalism—a view criticised by Marx and Engels."[424]

Moreover, it does not seem justified to speak of "classical" feudalism in India in the early Middle Ages or to compare the situation obtaining in India with the logical model. In our view, the task is to single out the basic traits of feudalism in India and to establish its peculiarities and its specific way of development.

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Otherwise, in drawing a picture of feudalism, one may confuse the "model" with reality or even substitute one for the other,[425] one may describe Indian feudalism's typical traits as irregular, of secondary importance and differing from the "classical" ones.[426]

While disapproving this view on feudal relations and feudal structure in ancient India, we are, nevertheless, likely to accept that even in the Mauryan epoch, which marked the high point of the development of slavery, such phenomena existed as, though not feudal in essence, comprised elements of a tendency towards the emergence, under certain conditions, of the feudal mode of production. There were tenancy relations,[427] the existence of private landed estates, the practice of donating land, land grants, land tenure relating to monasteries, etc.

The grants to the Brāhmaṇas which could be bequeathed and thus turned into hereditary holdings, and, which gradually became absolute holdings in perpetuity, were especially significant.

In the specific conditions of early India with the dominant position of the community, the limited use of slave labour, the obsolescence of many of the social institutions and the survival of some relations of the tribal system, the foregoing phenomena heralded the feudal relations of the future. Sometimes, outwardly, they resembled feudal-type relations, but in the Mauryan epoch they were not yet, either in their essence or in their function (their role in the social structure), elements of the feudal mode of production.

As the evidence of the *Arthaśāstra* and the *Mānava Dharmaśāstra* supported the thesis about the feudal structure in early India, it should be related to the post-Mauryan period, an epoch when feudal relations were actually taking shape and being consolidated. This does not mean that this pattern of development was followed in all parts of the vast empire. Feudalisation took place differently in the different regions of the country. In the Deccan and some southern areas, it was accelerated by the poor development of slavery,[428] while in other regions the transition to the secondary formation of a feudal type proceeded directly from the primary formation (primitive communal relations) rather than through slavery.[429]

In analysing the origins of feudalism in India, we must bear in mind that the "inception, functioning and transition to a higher form and conversion into another social organism are

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governed by specific laws."[430] Hence, it is necessary not merely to identify the peculiarities of the socio-economic relations, but also to investigate "the basis of society, which clothes itself in political and legal forms and in definite trends of social thought.[431] The problem of the social structure of ancient India is rather involved and calls for further investigation and analysis of additional evidence. All aspects of the problem as a whole should be examined not in isolation but in direct interrelation with one another. "It is only by taking society as a whole that we can attempt to elucidate its evolutionary trends, its most typical economic pattern, the kind of its main form of labour, and the form of its exploitation that had determined the economic, social and legal position of all the categories of direct producers. It is only on this basis that we can judge the nature of the society as a whole".[432]

The discussion of the socio-economic structure of ancient societies will certainly be carried on further, but it is evident even today that it has played a positive role in Indological studies. It has focused attention on the true character of the social structure obtaining in ancient India and has stressed the need for a profound analysis of those social phenomena which do not fit into the traditional schemes, once so unreservedly accepted.

4. Specific Features of the Caste Organisation in Monarchies and Republics

The study of the *varṇa* and caste organisation in ancient India helps to answer certain questions about the origins and evolution of this complex social phenomenon and explain many of its peculiar features.

The research output on the problem of caste is voluminous,[433] although we must admit that caste studies too have serious drawbacks, stemming not only from methodological mistakes but also from an erroneous approach to the analysis of the sources. In most cases, scholars either base their analysis on a single source or a group of related sources[434] or, otherwise, use evidence pertaining to different epochs and varied in character.[435] There are hardly any works dealing with caste organisation in specific chronological periods of ancient Indian history. This is to some

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extent accounted for by the nature of the available sources, the difficulty in dating them precisely and the impossibility of relating them to a concrete historical epoch. Again, when the texts contain chronological indications (above all, epigraphic documents) they give but fragmentary and often unreliable evidence regarding the problem concerned.

Most studies of the *varṇa* and caste structure in ancient India are based on sources (Sanskrit and, less frequently, Pāli) mainly reflecting such historical social institutions and phenomena as were associated with monarchies. This is primarily accounted for by the fact that the caste organisation took shape and became consolidated in ancient class society. It is no wonder that *varṇas* are mentioned particularly frequently in sources relating to the interrelations and judicial statutes of *varṇa*-caste groups within class society, for which monarchy was the usual form of state system in ancient times.

However, a contemporary scholar cannot be satisfied merely with data on the *varṇa* and caste structure in monarchies. Monarchy was doubtless a widespread form of polity but by no means the only one and alongside it, there existed non-monarchical (republican) formations (*gaṇas* and *saṅghas*), which played an important part in political and social life. Unfortunately, many aspects of this problem still remain insufficiently elucidated. Nevertheless, even such data as are already available to the researcher have shed light on the specific features of the *vraṇa* organisation in these republics.[436] An analysis of this problem is very important not only for the history of the *gaṇas* and *saṅghas* themselves but also for the study of the entire *varṇa* and caste structure in ancient India, for such an analysis enables us to clarify whether a change in the form of polity had a direct bearing on the class organisation of society and to trace how the character of and interrelations between *varṇas* within non-monarchical societies were changing.[437]

In other words, it would be interesting to carry out a comparative investigation into the position of the *varṇas* in monarchies and republics in the Mauryan epoch. In that period, there took shape certain features of the *varṇa* and caste system which were to develop further and take deeper root, in the subsequent epochs. This was in the first place, linked with economic and political shifts, the appearance of states (including republics) and the

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creation of a unified empire. Also important were changes in society's spiritual life, such changes being the emergence and spread of Buddhism and Jainism with their new ideas affecting many aspects of social life, including the *varṇa* and caste system.

Judging by the sources dated from the Mauryan epoch, the *varṇa* system had fully taken shape by that time. In the Buddhist canonical text, the *Majjhīma-Nikāya*, there is an important statement that, unlike the adjacent areas (countries) of the Yonas and the Kambojas where there existed only division into free men (*ayyo*, Skr. *ārya*) and slaves (*dāso*, Skr. *dāsa*), Indian society was further divided into four *varṇas*.[438] The *varṇa* affiliation to a large extent determined the position of a free Indian.

True, in that period, a person's property status, rather than his descent, was becoming increasingly more decisive for determining his social standing. Sources of the period emphasise that possession of wealth brought people respect and fame. The *Pañcatantra*, a more recent text, notes (II. 30-31) that it is wealth that gives a man power.

It is stated in the *Majjhima-Nikāya* (II. 84-85) that if a Śūdra had multiplied his wealth, he was entitled to hire as a servant not only another Śūdra but also a Vaiśya, a Kṣatriya or even a Brāhmaṇa. According to the *Vaśiṣṭha-Dharmasūtra* (XXVI. 16), Śūdras and Vaiśyas could get rid of misfortunes by means of property (*dhana*).[439] A propertied representative of a lower *varṇa* could even be ascribed a loftier descent.[440]

Most references to ancient Indian caste and *varṇa* organisation are contained in the Brāhmaṇic codes, or "Rules and Laws", the *Dharmasūtras* and *Dharmaśāstras*, whose compilers strove to ascribe the origins of the *varṇa* system to the will of the Creator, who allegedly had permanently granted the Brāhmaṇas the highest position in society. These texts are imbued with the idea of the Brāhmaṇas' superiority over all other *varṇas*.[441] A similar attitude is also characteristic of writings that appeared after the actual situation in society had changed, when, with the formation of states and large empires, the role of Kṣatriyas had grown, and the principle of descent had begun to lose its prime importance. Even then Brāhmaṇas tried to retain their prerogatives and bring ideological pressure to bear upon society through the force of tradition. Buddhism dealt a tangible blow to their status.[442]

Buddhist and Jaina sources are of greater interest for the

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study of the *varṇa* organisation in the Mauryan period than the tendentious Brāhmaṇic writings; however, one should bear in mind the purely Buddhist treatment of the problems under consideration. In contrast to the Brāhmaṇic teaching that people are different by birth, Buddhism advanced the gospel that all people are equal by birth and acquire spiritual merits during their lifetime. It was no coincidence that this creed was supported by the Kṣatriyas, in whose hands actual power was concentrated but who, according to the traditional scheme, occupied an inferior position in the overall *varṇa* system as compared with the Brāhmaṇas. It was also supported by some Vaiśyas (the rich tradesmen and craftsmen) and Śūdras, who were striving to obtain a position in society in keeping with their actual property status.

On the other hand, Buddhism by no means sought to abolish the social structure: the Buddhist scheme, like the Brāhmaṇic one, earmarks a superior place to the first two *varṇas*. This is evident from the dogmatic texts setting forth the Buddhist doctrine. For instance, one *sūtra* of the *Majjhima-Nikāya* records the answer given by the Buddha to the Kośala king, Pasenadi, who asked him about the *varṇas*. The Buddha said that two of the *varṇas* held a special position—the Kṣatriyas and the Brāhmaṇas—[443] though for the religious life of the *saṅgha* the *varṇa* distinctions were unimportant.[444] It is also interesting that disputes between the Buddhists and the Brāhmaṇas who advocated the old traditional views usually did not lead to any acute social conflicts or clashes.[445] The Buddha himself on many occasions spoke about the Brāhmaṇas' special position in society.[446] Nevertheless, the Buddhist scheme was different: the Kṣatriyas—the Brāhmaṇas—the Vaiśyas—the Śūdras. It may have reflected the actual position of the *varṇas* in the latter half of the first millennium B.C.

Important data on the *varṇa* and caste organisation are provided by Megasthenes. He distinguishes seven groups ("classes"—*genos*, in Indian society, differing in their status, judicial norms, and their role in political and social life: sophists (philosophers); cultivators, herdsmen and hunters; artisans and tradesmen; fighters; overseers; and councillors and assessors. The groups distinguished by the Seleucid ambassador are not identical with the Indian *varṇas*: the chief criterion on which he based his classification was profession or occupation. However, his scheme covered all four *varṇas* (this scheme, with some modifications, was adopted by

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many Greek and Roman authors who used his work).

It seems reasonable to believe that Megasthenes' data were based on his personal observations and on information he received from local Brāhmaṇas.[447] It is not fortuitous that sophists (philosophers) are at the top of his list. From his description, it follows that in the Mauryaṅ epoch Brāhmaṇas had retained a high status and sought to preserve their position and privileges. Their influence in the ideological and religious spheres was considerable. According to his account, they enjoyed high esteem as they offered sacrifices to gods and practised magical rites : "To this class the knowledge of divination among the Indians is exclusively restricted, and none but a sophist is allowed to practise that art" (*Ind.*, XI. 4).

Brāhmaṇas also acted as advisers to rulers : "Their services are employed . . . also publicly by the kings at what is called the Great Synod, wherein at the beginning of the new year all the philosophers are gathered together before the king at the gates, when any philosopher who may have committed any useful suggestion to writing, or observing any means for improving the crops and the cattle, or for promoting the public interests, declares it publicly."[448] Similar evidence is also found in Indian sources. Judging by the *Arthaśāstra* (I.10), it was usually a Brāhmaṇa who acted as the *Purohita*, the royal priest and the king's preceptor, whose role at the court was very important (his salary amounted to 48,000 *paṇas.*)

Even Buddhist writings describe the Brāhmaṇas as chief advisers to the rulers and high dignitaries in monarchical states, and name them among the officials, *amātyas* (Pāli *amacca*) and *mahāmātras* (Pāli *mahāmātta*). It is known, for instance, that the Magadhan king, Ajātaśatru, who adhered to the Buddha's teachings, had for his adviser the Brāhmaṇa, Vassakāra, the author of the plan of the campaign against the Licchavis. According to Buddhist tradition, it was under the supervision of Vassakāra and another Brāhmaṇa, Sunīdha, that the capital of the country, Pāṭaliputra, was erected. The *Jātakas* tell us that the Brāhmaṇas were tutors to crown princes and retainers of the kings.[449] They were respected by representatives of other *varṇas* including the Vaiśyas.[450]

Although Megasthenes says nothing about the property status of the Brāhmaṇas, Indian sources contain references to land and

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money granted to them by the king.[451] Some of them supervised tax collection. According to the *Jātakas* and other Buddhist writings, some Brāhmaṇa families were very rich and influential (*aḍḍha, mahādhana, mahābhoga, mahāsālākula;*[452] in some cases their estates were very large.

The Buddhist texts maintain that for a Brāhmaṇa the ideal is to be an ascetic with no property.[453] This stand may reflect the struggle against Brāhmaṇas[454] who owned large plots of land and who sometimes even engaged in trade on a large scale. The following words are ascribed to the Buddha, "Previously, Brahmans lived in woods and led a modest life and now they live in fortified places guarded by armed men."[455] The *Jātakas* (I.425) refer to Brāhmaṇas devoured by greed for wealth.

There are references to the participation by the Brāhmaṇas in the lagal system and to the fact that they acted as *senāpati*, commanders-in-chief in the army.[456] Moreover, the *Jātakas* sometimes mention kings of Brāhmaṇic descent, although, even according to the Brāhmaṇic "laws", the government and protection of all subjects was the prerogative of the Kṣatriyas.[457]

It is suggestive that Patañjali, who lived in the 2nd century. B.C. and was well acquainted with the situation in the Kṣatriyan republics, believed that the Brāhmaṇas should play the leading part in the state (evidently, the monarchy).[458] Listing the *varṇas* according to their importance, he follows the traditional scheme : *brāhmaṇakṣatriyavaṭśūdrāḥ*.[459]

The real political rule was exercised by the Kṣatriyas, who wielded the actual power but the role of the Brāhmaṇas in monarchies also was very great.

And yet the new conditions brought about by the development of economy and the growth of towns, which led to the consolidation of the postion of the artisans and tradesmen (judging by the *Gṛhyasūtras*, the Brāhmaṇas had retained their influence mostly in villages and they avoided city life),[460] and the decline of the authority of the Brāhmaṇas due to the spread of Buddhism, could not fail to affect their status.

Sources contain abundant evidence to the effect that Brāhmaṇas began to abandon their traditional occupations. The Brāhmaṇic "laws" (Āpastamba, 1.7.20; II.5.10, Gautama, X.5; Manu, X.82) allowed them to engage in agriculture, cattle-raising

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and trade. The *Aṅguttara-Nikāya* (III.223) speaks about Brāhmaṇas who used "every means of making a living". The *Jātakas* mention Brāhmaṇas tilling land, serving as herdsmen, huntsmen, traders, craftsmen (*sippiko*, from *sippa*, Skr. *śilpa*, "craft"), servants[461] and even soldiers (*yodhājīva*).[462] The *Samyutta-Nikāya* (I.170-171) mentions a Brāhmaṇa who had owned a farm where sesame was grown but then became poor and got into debt.[463] Patañjali (III.4.69) mentions a Brāhmaṇa working as a woodcutter *kāṣṭhadhid brāhmaṇaḥ*[464] and notes that there were people in this *varṇa* so poor that they were linked with it only by their birth.[465]

The *Suttanipāta* (II.7) tells us that they had ceased to observe their ancient *Dharma* (i.e. the traditional way of life).[466] In accordance with the *śāstras*, the Brāhmaṇas were to be exempted from taxes,[467] but other sources record that they did pay taxes and mention severe punishments that could be inflicted on a Brāhmaṇa. The author of the *Arthaśāstra* recommended that a Brāhmaṇa guilty of encroaching on state power and raising a rebellion be drowned (IV.11) and, in case (of theft, be branded with a mark) in the shape of a dog or in the shape of a headless trunk if he had killed a human being (IV.8) : "Proclaiming a Brahmin guilty of sinful deeds and making the scar of the mark on him, the king should exile him from the country or settle him in mines" (IV.8; Kangle's translation). Buddhist writings often list the punishments[468] and cite instances when Brāhmaṇas were sentenced to death.[469]

Naturally, the decline of the role of the Brāhmaṇas in the Mauryan epoch did not mean that they had lost their influence or their privileges completely. True, in the political and ideological spheres (under the rule of the Kṣatriyas and the consolidation of Buddhism,) they were compelled to lower their claims, but in the economic and social areas they still retained some of their position. This situation was primarily characteristic of the monarchic states of Magadha and Kośala, where there were many Brāhmaṇic settlements (*brāhmaṇagāma*) and private estates owned by Brāhmaṇas,[470] and where the practice of granting them land was particularly widespread. However, big temple estates had not yet appeared in India in that period, and there existed no single organisation of the Brāhmaṇas. There was thus no economic or political foundation for their real dominance.[471]

Political power was concentrated in the hands of the

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Kṣatriyas, whose role, as has already been mentioned, had increasingly grown in the period of the formation of large states and a unified empire. Their importance was particularly great in the republics, but they also played a leading part in the monarchies. Buddhist writings always place them before the Brāhmaṇas. In his conversation with the Brāhmaṇa Ambaṭṭha, the Buddha said that the Kṣatriyas were superior to Brāhmaṇas,[472] that they were the best of the four *varṇas*[473] and that nobody could compare with them in purity of descent. In one *Jātaka* (I.49), the Buddha is quoted as saying that Buddhas have never been born in the *varṇa* of the Vaiśyas (*Vessa*) or the Śūdras (*Sūdda*), but always in the *varṇas* of the Kṣatriyas or the Brāhmaṇas. "And since the Kṣatriya *varṇa* is now the highest one, I shall be born again as a member of that *varṇa*." According to tradition, he descended from a Kṣatriya clan.

As a rule, kings were Kṣatriyas (in many ancient sources *Kṣatriya* and *Rājanya* are synonyms),[474] who were responsible for keeping order in the country and observing *varṇa* laws (*varṇa-dharma*); the same was true of big state officials.

Their political power rested on an appropriate economic basis. Many of them possessed large estates.

In explaining the word "Kṣatriya" (*khattiya*), the *Dīgha-Nikāya* (III.92-93) and Buddhaghoṣa (*Sum.*, II.870) interpreted it as "owner of fields" (*khettānaṃ patīti kho khattiyo*—the *Dīgha-Nikāya*; "kṣatriyas" is not merely a title, they are owners of fields—*khattiyo . . . ti na kevalaṃ akkharam eva, to pan' assa khettasāmino* —Buddhaghoṣa).

The army was also in the hands of the Kṣatriyas. Megasthenes noted the high position of the military estate (Arrian, *Ind.*, XII.2-4) : "The fifth class among the Indians consists of the warriors, who are second in point of numbers to the husbandmen, but lead a life of supreme freedom and enjoyment. They have only military duties to perform. Others make their arms, and others supply them with horses, and they have others to attend on them in the camp, who take care of their horses, clean their arms, drive their elephants, prepare their chariots, and act as their charioteers. As long as they are required to fight, they fight, and when peace returns they abandon themselves to enjoyment, the pay which they receive from the state being so liberal that they can with ease maintain themselves and others besides."

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The right to carry arms was mainly enjoyed by the Kṣatriyas, but in special cases it was also extended to the Brāhmaṇas and the Vaiśyas *Mānava Dharmaśāstra* (VIII.348). This is confirmed by Megasthenes' statement that peasants had no arms and were not interested in military affairs (*Ind.*, XI.9).

It is true that Kauṭilya also mentions troops consisting of Brāhmaṇas,[475] but this evidently refers to monarchies alone. In the republics the army, and especially its leadership, was constituted mostly by the Kṣatriyas.

In the period under consideration they began to lay claims to a leading role in the ideological sphere as well. Curiously enough, even the *Upaniṣads* indicate claims of that kind. It was Kṣatriya king and not a Brāhmaṇa who was sometimes consulted as an authority on the *Ātman* (*Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, V.11). There was even a case of a Kṣatriya teaching a Brāhmaṇa (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, XI.1), although it was emphasised that it ran contrary to the custom. These data have direct parallels in early Buddhist sources and can be linked with an anti-Brāhmaṇic reaction.[476]

It should be noted that in the period in question a differentiation was emerging among the Kṣatriyas. Some tribes were getting poorer and their members became hired soldiers. Megasthenes' statement that they fought when it was time to fight (*Ind.*, XII.4) and lived at the expense of the royal treasury (Strabo, XV.1.47) evidently refers to them. Many Kṣatriyas were obliged to engage in trade and crafts,[477] and their status approached that of the Vaiśyas. But on the whole, in that period, the Kṣatriya *varṇa* increased its influence and real power. It is no wonder that the Brāhmaṇas, striving to consolidate their position, favoured a union with the Kṣatriyas, who could ensure political stability and the preservation of the existing social structure. "The Brāhmaṇa and the Kṣatriya," the *Mānava Dharmaśāstra* reads, "having united, flourish in this and in the other world" (IX.322). Kauṭilya, an advocate of strong rule, was also aware of the necessity of this union. "Kṣatriya power, made to prosper by the Brāhmaṇa (chaplain), sanctified by spells in the form of the counsel of ministers, (and) possessed of arms in the form of compliance with the science (of politics), triumphs, remaining ever unconquered" (I.9; Kangle's translation).

In the monarchies, these two castes constituted the supreme group which stood apart from the rest of the population.[478] Even

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the Buddhist writings juxtapose the Kṣatriyas and the Brāhmaṇas as high-born ("twice-born") with the other two *varṇas* and the low-born ("once-born").[479]

A number of changes had also occurred in the position of the third *varṇa*, the Vaiśyas. In the Mauryan period, owing to the country's economic development, their position improved and the status of some groups of Vaiśyas, who had waxed rich, was approaching that of the Kṣatriyas and the Brāhmaṇas. On the other hand, the impoverished Vaiśyas were sinking to the level of the Śūdras. Among the latter, though, a more propertied layer was being isolated. Nevertheless, in general the standing of the Vaiśyas as "twice-born" differed essentially from that of the Śūdras, who, even if they should succeed in raising their property status, still remained at the bottom of the social ladder.

The sources, primarily the Buddhist ones, show that most Vaiśyas were engaged in agriculture and crafts. They constituted the bulk of tax payers. Among them there were owners of land plots,[480] sometimes of quite large estates,[481] and also rich *seṭṭhas*, who carried on big trade transactions and engaged in usury. Judging by the *Jātakas*, some of them even sat in law-courts (VI.43). There are also many references to ruined Vaiśyas, who had to take up "low" occupations.[482]

Propertied Vaiśyas had retained a certain influence in social life, but by the period under consideration their political role in the monarchies had declined. Vaiśyas, who had previously taken part in coronation ceremonies and in councils, were gradually losing their privileges.

Megasthenes' words that agriculturists "never go to town, to take part in its tumults (Strabo, XV.1.40) are characteristic. Kauṭilya's evidence makes it clear (II.1) that the state rigorously saw to it that the village communities should remain isolated.

It is not improbable that the report in the classical and some Indian sources arms relates to this period. The author of the *Arthaśāstra* speaks about enrolment of troops from Vaiśyas and Śūdras (IX.2); however, the king evidently resorted to this measure only in emergencies. Besides, the Vaiśyas, and particularly the Śūdras, in all likelihood were not full warriors[483] but performed some auxillary work in the army.

The Vaiśyas could not occupy high government posts either.[484]

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It is interesting that even in the Brāhmaṇic "laws", where the "twice-born" are juxtaposed with "once-born," there is a tendency to treat the Vaiśyas on par and indiscriminately with the Śūdras.[485] The *Mānava Dharmaśāstra* (VIII.418) recommends that the king should make both fulfil their duties: agriculture, cattle-raising, trade and crafts.[486]

According to the *Majjhima-Nikāya* (II.180), the Śūdras' activities were tied up with agriculture. A certain increase in their importance is indicated by the evidence in Kauṭilya on new areas being populated by Śūdra agriculturists (*Śūdra-Karṣaka*, II.1) and on Śūdras settling down in towns in districts where workers in wool, yarn, bamboo, leather, armours, weapons and shields lived (II.4).

In the earlier *Dharmasūtras*, a tendency appears for the first time to treat the Śūdras on an equal footing with the representatives of other *varṇas*. When the question of inheritance arose, the difference consisted solely in the fact that among the Brāhmaṇas, the eldest brother received goats; Kṣatriyas, horses; Vaiśyas, cattle; and Śūdras, sheep. The data in the *Arthaśāstra* can be cited as relating to the shares of the legacy for a Brāhmaṇa's offspring by wives belonging to different *varṇas*: the son by a Brāhmaṇa wife received 4 shares, the son by a Kṣatriya wife 3, the son by a Vaiśya wife 2, and the son by a Śūdra wife 1 share (III.6). The same quantitative ratio determined different punishments for selling a person into slavery: "For one selling or keeping as a pledge a minor Arya individual except a slave for livelihood, the fine is twelve *paṇas* for a kinsman in the case of a Śūdra, double that in the case of a Vaiśya, three times in the case of a Kṣatriya, four times in the case of Brāhmaṇa" (III.13; Kangle's translation).

Improvement in the economic position of the Śūdras did not favourably affect their low social status. In comparison with the Vedic epoch, their political role had further declined[487] and they remained largely the "service category", devoid of any political rights. It is clear that relations between the Śūdras and representatives of the higher *varṇas* were strained. The Brāhmaṇas did not conceal their contempt for the Śūdras who were considered low, cruel and deceitful and who, as they had to admit, nourished enmity for them (*paiśunya*).[488]

The above data point to the fact that in the period under

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consideration, the insurmountable barriers that the Brāhmaṇas had erected between the *varṇas*, especially between the higher and lower ones, were breaking down. The authors of ancient treatises, "laws" and dynasty lists were keenly sensitive to this. Noteworthy in this respect is the description in the *Yuga-Purāṇa* of an age of decline bound to come under Aśoka's successors. "Then," the authors of the text apprehensively, "the Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and the Śūdras will act in the same way and even wear the same clothes" (*brāhmaṇāḥ, kṣatriyā, vaiśyāḥ, śūdrāścaiva yugakṣaye samaveśāḥ samācārā bhaviṣyanti*). [489]

On the whole, data relating to the development of the *varṇa* and caste structure in monarchies in the latter half of the first millennium B.C. reveal the following peculiarities : the emergence of the property principle in assessing a man's status in society, the growing role of the Kṣatriyas, the preservation by the Brāhmaṇas of important positions despite a certain decline in their ideological influence, the rise of the Vaiśyas' economic status accompanied by a loss of their political rights and the growth of differentiation as a result of which some of their groups came nearer to the Śūdras, whose economic position had also improved to a certain extent.

The picture appears somewhat different when we analyse the caste organisation in the republics (*gaṇas* and *saṅghas*) of ancient India.

The available sources attest distinct class differences and social inequality in these republics. In the republics too the four *varṇa* division can be observed (Kṣatriyas, Brāhmaṇas, Vaiśyas, Śūdras), although some scholars deny its existence in the republics.[490] As a rule, data about them are associated with the Kṣatriyas, who actually concentrated[491] all power in their hands.[492]

The sources have preserved the story of the rivalry between some monarchies, *saṅghas* and *gaṇas* for the possession of the Buddha's remains. In presenting their claims, the Licchavis, Mallas and Śākyas declared that, like the Buddha, they were Kṣatriyas—*khattiyas*.[493] Even in the *Mānava Dharmaśāstra* (X.22), the Licchavis and the Mallas are described as Kṣatriyas (*rājanya*), although they are included in the group of the Vrātyas. In the *saṅghas* and *gaṇas*, the Kṣatriyas constituted the highest privileged group of people enjoying full rights (even though there was a strong property differentiation among them[494] and they took

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an active part in the government. The fact that a man belonged to one of the ruling Kṣatriya families which were the founders of those *saṅghas* and *gaṇas* was instrumental in determining his place in all spheres of political and public life.

According to Pāṇini and his commentators, the title *rājanya* was borne by the descendants of some Kṣatriya tribes. In the Andhaka-Vṛṣṇi *saṅgha*, for instance, this title was applied only to the descendants of the Śvāphalaka, Caitraka, Śini and Vāsudeva tribes; the other tribes, even though they belonged to the same *saṅgha*, did not possess that status (*Andhaka-Vṛṣṇaya ete na tu rājanyāḥ*.[495]

The influence of the Kṣatriya families and their role in the *gaṇas* and the *saṅghas* are corroborated by the *Kuṇāla-Jātaka* and by Buddhaghoṣa. Special power in the *saṅghas* belonged to Kṣatriyas bearing the title of *rāja*, which, judging by the evidence, they received in a special consecration ritual.[496] The *Mahāvastu* cites the monk Udayin's words on the occasion of the election of Śuddhodana, who bore the title of *rāja*, the head of the *gaṇa* of the Śākyas : "Rājās are the Kṣatriyas passing a special consecration ritual (*kṣatriyā rājāno murdhābhiṣikta*)." The Kṣatriyas took great pains to guard their privileged position.

The Licchavis, for instance, had a special reservoir, where the consecration ritual was performed (*Vesāli-nagare gaṇa-rājakulānām abhiseka-maṅgalapokkharaṇi*).[497] A trespasser who took ablution there, i.e. a ritual that only the Kṣatriyas of the Licchavis were authorised to perform, was severely punished.[498] They obviously struggled for the title of *rāja*. It is reported in the *Lalitavistara* that each of them imagined himself to be a *rāja* (*ekaika eva manyate aham rājā aham rājeti*).[499]

Citizens who enjoyed full rights but did not belong to the Kṣatriya *varṇa* were allowed to attend the *gaṇa* assemblies but could not be elected to leading posts. The *Mahābhārata* mentions that the chiefs (*mukhya*) in a *gaṇa* enjoyed the greatest power and decided on matters of high importance.[500] Buddhaghoṣa's commentary on the *Dīgha-Nikāya* provides reasources to assert that "chiefs in a *gaṇa*" were *rājas*, representatives of the Kṣatriyas.[501] Their leading role can also be seen in the evidence of the *Arthaśāstra*, which even distinguishes a special group of *saṅghas* (to which belonged Licchavis, Mallas, Madrakas, etc.) characterised as *rājaśabdopajīvinaḥ*, "the *saṅghas* whose members

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bore the title of *rājan*".[502] According to Kauṭilya, a member of a *saṅgha* could be convicted or rejected (probably exiled) only by men who bore the title of *rāja* (*rājaśabdibhiravaruddham avakṣiptaṃ vā*).[503]

Thus, Kṣatriyas who had gone through the consecration rite and bore the title of *rāja* constituted the leading group in the *gaṇas*, controlling their internal organisation and exercising executive power.

The basis of this dominant position of the Kṣatriyas in the above-mentioned republics is very important. The right to land ownership was indisputably of paramount significance.[504] Although land was considered the property of the entire *gaṇa*, it actually belonged to the Kṣatriyas who, judging by the sources, had private estates. As we have seen, in the monarchies, alongside the royal lands, there existed private estates of the Brāhmaṇas.

The evidence cited is insufficient for drawing any final conclusions about the status of the Kṣatriyas, but it is obvious that in the republics (especially, the aristocratic ones) they were vested with even greater power than in the monarchies. The dominance of the military aristocracy in the non-monarchical associations (*autonomoi Indoi, abasileutos polis*) is attested not only by Indian but (which is highly noteworthy) also by classical authors, many of whom had participated in Alexander's Indian campaign. They list among the "autonomous Indians", who had no monarchical rule and were headed by the aristocracy and military leaders, some peoples of North-West and West India that are known in Indian sources as *saṅgha* and *gaṇa*.[505]

In the sources, the Kṣatriyas are hardly mentioned together with the other *varṇas*, although in the case of the monarchies such association is quite frequent. This fact, which to some extent depends on the nature of the source, is generally accounted for by the peculiarities of the *varṇa* organisation in the non-monarchical state formations, with their sharp contrast between the Kṣatriyas and the rest of the population.

Since much of our information on the Kṣatriya dominance in the *saṅghas* and *gaṇas* is based on Buddhist texts, this may create the wrong impression that their leading role in these organisations was due to the influence of the Buddhist doctrine. Buddhism, which rejected the exclusiveness of the Brāhmaṇas and

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which was widespread in some of these associations, was likely to have affected the relations between the *varṇas*, but this could not have been the decisive factor determining the structure of the *varṇa* and caste organisation. The privileged status of the Kṣatriyas in *gaṇas* and *saṅghas* is known to have also been mentioned in non-Buddhist writings—in texts without any religious or even Brāhmaṇic slant in their content. It is also significant that the Kṣatriyas dominated in most *saṅghas* and *gaṇas*, and not only in those where Buddhism was widespread (North-East India, primarily the Licchavis and the Śākyas). It is possible to cite, for example, the evidence of the classical authors and of Pāṇini on the Kṣatriyan associations in the North-West and West India, where Buddhism made its way at a later period when the *gaṇas* had actually lost their power, and also Patañjali's data on the Kṣudrakas and the Mālavas (the Oksudrakai and the Malloi of the Greek sources).

Finally, the decline of Buddhism did not lead to a change in the social structure of the non-monarchical formations in North-East India; the Kṣatriyas preserved their privileged position there.

Thus, the scheme of *varṇa* division (the Kṣatriyas, the Brāhmaṇas, the Vaiśyas, the Śūdras), found in the Buddhist sources and differing from the traditional Brāhmaṇic ones, should not be accounted for by the influence of the Buddhist doctrine alone, but must be linked with the real position of the Kṣatriyas and the Brāhmaṇas in that period, primarily in *gaṇas* and *saṅghas* (most of all, in the aristocratic republics).

Evidence on the other *varṇas* is rather scanty; nevertheless, it enables us to affirm the existence of the Brāhmaṇas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras in *saṅghas* and *gaṇas*. In one of the *sūtras* (V.3.114), Pāṇini mentions Brāhmaṇas who, together with Kṣatriyas, resided in the country of Vāhika—"a *saṅgha* that lived by force of arms."[506] He also knew of Brāhmaṇas living in monarchies.[507] Judging by his commentaries, their status differed from that of the members of this *varṇa* in *saṅghas* and *gaṇas*. As Patañjali and Kāśikā[508] show, Kṣatriyas alone enjoyed a special status and had a designation distinguishing them from the others; Brāhmaṇas could receive the same title, i.e. probably achieve a position similar to that of the Kṣatriyas, only in exceptional cases, which are unfortunately unknown to us. The same is evidently shown

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by the data of the Jaina sources, which show that the Brāhmaṇas lived in a certain section of the town of Kuṇḍapura (in the territory of the Licchavi *gaṇa*) separately from the Kṣatriyas (in the text they are described after the Kṣatriyas).[509]

The fact that in descriptions of the life and internal administration of republics the Brāhmaṇas are frequently mentioned alongside householders (*gahapati*), Vaiśyas, is worth noting when we are trying to determine their status.[510] In descriptions of the *varṇas* in monarchies, Brāhmaṇas are usually mentioned as a separate group (in Brāhmaṇic *śāstras*, as the first highest *varṇa*, and in Buddhist ones, as a *varṇa* second to the Kṣatriyas); in cases where they are mentioned together with members of the other *varṇas*, they rank with the Kṣatriyas. We are inclined to interpret the foregoing evidence of the nexus between the Brāhmaṇas and the Vaiśyas not as a mere coincidence but as a reflection of their actual position in the republics. The Kṣatriyas in the republics had a position distinct from that of the rest of the population, and the Brāhmaṇas were often mentioned in the same group as the other free people, particularly the Vaiśyas, even though in a number of cases they might have been on a higher rung of the social ladder.

An analysis of Buddhist writings at various levels of textual information makes it possible, on the one hand, to distinguish the non-dogmatic elements (extrasystemic with respect to the framework of the Buddhist doctrine), which reflected to a large extent real phenomena and processes and, on the other, to comprehend the transformation of such phenomena and processes in the interpretation of both traditional Brāhmaṇas and Buddhists. Such an approach yields further data on the specific position of the Brāhmaṇa *varṇa* in the *saṅghas* and *gaṇas* of North-East India, where the Pāli Buddhist canon is known to have taken shape.

In the *Ambaṭṭha-sūtta* of the *Dīgha-Nikāya* (III.1.9) there is a story told by a Brāhmaṇa, Ambaṭṭha, about his visit to the *gaṇa* of the Śākyas. He complained to the Buddha that the Śākyas did not show due respect to the Brāhmaṇas, who, in his opinion, were the highest group in society, while all the others—the Kṣatriyas, the Vaiśyas and the Śūdras—[511] were their servants.[512] When he visited Kapilavastu, the capital of the Śākyas, and was present in the *santhāgāra* (a special assembly hall

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where important issues were debated), the Śākyas (*sambahulā sakyā c'eva sakyākumārā*) did not show him any respect and did not even offer him a seat. Buddhaghoṣa's commentary shows that the Śākyas in the *santhāgāra* were in fact Kṣatriyas who had gone through the consecration ritual and bore the title of *rāja*, as well as young Kṣatriyas who were not yet consecrated[513] (*sakyā ti abhisittorājāno*; *sakyakumārā ti anabhisittā*).

The Buddha's attitude in this dispute is interesting. He did not deny that the Śākyas (primarily, Kṣatriyas) had treated the Brāhmaṇas in that manner, but he resolutely objected to any attacks against them. Moreover, the Buddha seemed to justify their actions by declaring that even a little bird in its nest might sing whatever it liked, all the more so the Śākyas in their home town of Kapilavāstu.

The *Ambaṭṭha-sūtta*, evidence which reflected the different attitudes towards the relations between the Kṣatriyas and the Brāhmaṇas in the *saṅghas*, makes it possible, by taking into account its functional purport at different levels of textual information, to judge of the Brāhmaṇas' actual position in the republics (in this case, the aristocratic republic of the Śākyas).

A passage in the *Mahāvastu* (III.176) can also be cited to show how the ruler of a *gaṇa*, *rāja* Suddhodana, who urged the Śākyas to join the Buddhist community, addressed the Kṣatriyas : "The Buddha was also a Kṣatriya and it would not be nice if his followers were Brāhmaṇas (*so ca kṣatriyo brāhmaṇaparivāro va taṃ no anurūpaṃ bhavet*)." This is clearly an attempt to distinguish the Kṣatriyas from the Brāhmaṇas.

Pāṇini (V.3.114) referred to "*saṅghas* living in the country of Vāhika by the profession of arms" (*āyudhajīvī saṅghas*). Among the *āyudhajīvī saṅghas*, he and his commentators list the Madrakāras (IV.1.173) and the Vasāti (IV.2.53). The Vasāti correspond to the Ossadioi, who, according to classical authors (*Anabasis*, VI.15), belonged to the group of "autonomous Indians." The authors of the *Mahābhārata* wrathfully condemned these people's customs, their social organisation and the deviation from the Brāhmaṇic way of life. The Brāhmaṇas called them impure people who had broken away from the tenets of the *Dharma* (*naṣṭadharma*). The evidence of the *Mahābhārata* suggests that some peoples in North-West India, governed by the *saṅgha*, had retained, to a large extent, survivals of the tribal

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structure and even some features of matriarchy. But was it only the failure to observe the marital customs and the *Dharma* that caused such an unflattering opinion about these peoples ? The Brāhmaṇas who lived in *saṅghas* or *gaṇas* and were engaged, by their own admission,[514] in carrying out certain secret missions[515] violently opposed the democratic practices prevailing there. It is not improbable that their indignation was to some extent accounted for by the fact that there, and particularly in the "*saṅghas* living by the profession of arms" (as epic records show, such *saṅghas* were the main object of the attacks), the Brāhmaṇas did not occupy any privileged position and did not enjoy any prerogatives. Moreover, they declared that, like gods, they refused to accept gifts from the Vahīkas, the residents of the country of Āraṭṭa, allegedly born of Śūdras who had taken their wives from other castes.[516] In the non-monarchical formations, particularly in the "*saṅghas* living by the profession of arms", no such insurmountable caste barriers seem to have existed, although there was an obvious distinction between the *varṇas*. This is probably indicated by the following words in the *Mahābhārata* (VIII.30.53-54), uttered by an orthodox Brāhmaṇa : "Among the Vāhikas a man becomes a Brāhmaṇa, then a Kṣatriya, then a Vaiśya, a Śūdra, a barber and then again a Brāhmaṇa, and after that he once more becomes a slave."[517]

The Brāhmaṇas would not accept the fact that they did not play the leading part in the *gaṇas* and *saṅghas*, that all power was concentrated in the hands of the Kṣatriyas, and that a democratic polity existed there ensuring participation of broader sections of the free population in public life.

In the Mauryan epoch, when a centralised state was being created and the position of Buddhism was being consolidated, the Kṣatriyas' influence had indisputably strengthened; one can perhaps even speak of their dominance. In the post-Mauryan and, particularly, the post-Gupta period, when large centralised empires began to crumble, feudal states began to take shape and Hinduism was reinforced, the position of the Brāhmaṇas was strengthened once again.

It is even possible to trace certain similarities and differences in the evolution of the relative position of the *varṇas* in the monarchies and the non-monarchical formations throughout a number of epochs. In the Vedic and late-Vedic epochs, Brāhmaṇas

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occupied the leading position. In the period when states were taking shape and the old tribal organisation was breaking down, power gradually concentrated in the hands of the Kṣatriyas, which was particularly manifest in the oligarchies. In the monarchies, the Brāhmaṇas played a very important, if not the leading role in the social, economic and spiritual life of society. The Kṣatriyas' role gained particular importance in the period of the creation of the unified Mauryan empire and the spread of Buddhism. Not only in the *vijita* itself but also in the *saṅghas* and *gaṇas* which succeeded in preserving their independence and joining the empire as autonomous units,[518] the Kṣatriyas headed the government, although the Brāhmaṇas there, as in the other monarchies of the period, strove to retain their privileges.

The downfall of the Mauryan state and the decline of Buddhism helped to strengthen their position. On the other hand, the collapse of the empire brought about the strengthening of the non-monarchical formations (mainly republics), which as in the initial period of their history (6th-5th centuries. B.C.), played an important role.

The rise of the Guptas, who strove to unify the diverse states into a single whole, increased the influence of the Kṣatriyas in the monarchies, although the Brāhmṇas still held their position and continued to spread the idea of their superiority. R.S. Sharma believes that sources of the Gupta period provide examples of a political alliance between the Brāhmṇas and the Kṣatriyas.[519]

In the following epoch, which witnessed the disintegration of the non-monarchic states, the key positions in the monarchies were increasingly passing into the hands of the Brāhmaṇas.

Despite the obvious conventionality of the above scheme, it gives some idea of the long and strenuous struggle between the two *varṇas* and, above all, of the peculiar relations between there in states with different forms of polity.

Sources frequently mention members of the *varṇa* of the Vaiśyas—various artisans, traders, and ordinary householders (*gṛhapati*) in *saṅghas* and *gaṇas*. On the whole, the descriptions of their internal life, as given by Indian and Classical authors, suggest the presence of a considerable number of agriculturists and artisans. Vaiśyas evidently played a significant part there, Judging by the *Mahāvastu*, the artisans of the *gaṇa* of the Śākyas were highly specialised.[520] For example, in Kapilavastu

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there were jewellers (*maṇikāraka*), goldsmiths (*sauvarṇika*). stone-carvers (*prastārika*), coppersmiths (*tāmrakuṭṭa*), potters (*kumbhakāra*), leather-dressers (*carmakāra*), weavers (*ūrṇavāyaka*), carpenters (*vardhikarūpakāraka*), etc. The craftsmen were evidently united into special corporations, *śreṇis*, headed by elders.

Among the *saṅghas*, Kauṭilya mentions the *vārttāśastropajīvinaḥ*—"*saṅghas* living by an economic vocation (agriculture, trade and by the profession of arms)", in which Vaiśyas probably occupied an important position. The development of state polity, the formation of large states, and the socio-economic progress of the period enhanced the role of the Vaiśyas both in the monarchies and the non-monarchical formations. In the republics, where the Brāhmaṇas had lost their position as the leading *varṇa*, where the specific features of the political organisation exerted a certain influence on the relations between the *varṇas*, and where the crafts and trade prospered, the influence of the vast group of Vaiśyas must have grown particularly strong. There are references in the sources that, alongside the Brāhmaṇas, they took part in the *gaṇa* assemblies.[521]

There are many indications in the *Jātakas*, in the Buddhist canon and commentaries on Pāṇini of the presence, in *gaṇas* and *saṅghas*, of *karmakaras*, who usually belonged to the Śūdra *varṇa*. Unfortunately, we do not have any similar data at our disposal on the status of the Sūdras; however, the data in many sources, and, in the first place, Patañjali, suggest that some of their groups approached the status of slaves and their position differed sharply from that of the highest privileged *varṇa*, the Kṣatriyas.

According to the evidence of the *Jātakas*, *karmakaras* were employed together with slaves for irrigation work in the *gaṇas* of the Śākyas and the Koliyas. When the head of the Śākyas, Śuddhodana, asked his brother Mahānāma about the duties of a layman,[522] he heard in answer that such a man should supervise the work of slaves and *karmakaras*.[523]

The peculiarities of the political structure and certain democratic principles of government, while never affecting the caste basis of the social organisation of the non-monarchical states (republics), must have exerted an influence on the role of the *varṇas* in them. This found its expression in the privileged (compared with the monarchies) position of the Kṣatriyas and the decline in the role of the Brāhmaṇas accompanied by the growth

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of the importance of the Vaiśyas. However, neither the class structure nor the democracy in the *saṅghas* and *gaṇas*, nor the sharp division between the Kṣatriyas and the rest of the free population could erase the borderlines separating the *varṇas*. The existing inequality was expressed, for instance, in the ban on marriages between members of different *varṇas*.[524] The same is borne out by an episode narrated in the *Mahāvastu*. The barber Upāli, having become a monk, addressed in person the head (*rāja*) of the Śākyas, Śuddhodana. This caused resentment on the part of the high officials : "How could Upāli, a man of low descent (*hīnajātīyo*), call the rāja by name ?!' This is similar to Patañjali's evidence, according to which Kṣatriyas alone were given special designations in the *saṅghas*, which were denied to slaves and *karmakaras*.

References in the sources to the division of the capital of the *gaṇa* of Licchavis, Vaiśālī, into three parts, as well as such references as that among the Licchaviṣ there existed differences "in colour" are also of interest. This seems relevant to the caste division, although it may not indicate any direct correspondence between colour and *varṇa* divisions.

According to the *Cīvaravastu* and the Tibetan *Dulva*, the three parts of Vaiśālī were inhabited by the higher, middle and lower groups of the population, respectively;[525] the differences between the groups were fixed, as is seen, for example, in marital relations. A girl from the higher group could marry only a man from the higher group; a girl from the middle group could only marry a man either from the highest or the middle group, while a girl from the lower group could marry a man from any of the three groups. These customs, that took the shape of statutes issued by the *gaṇa* as the supreme authority, are quite similar to the rules about marriages between members of different *varṇas* described in many Indian sources.[526] But while Brāhmaṇic "laws" recognised the Brāhmaṇas as the highest *varṇa*, the highest group with the Licchavis were the Kṣatriyas. This supposition is borne out by a reference in the *Cīvaravastu* that a former high official of King Bimbisāra, Khaṇḍa, on his arrival in Vaiśālī, was lodged in the first part of the city since he was a *pradhāna*, that is a Kṣatriya *rāja*.

Jaina sources mention that Vaiśālī was divided into Kṣatriya and Brāhmaṇa areas, which probably correspond to the divisions

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given in the *Cīvaravastu* and the *Dulva*. That the groups of the population resident in these parts can be correlated to classes is confirmed by the *Cīvaravastu*, which says that a very rich householder (*gṛhapati*), i.e. a Vaiśya, Mahānāma did not live in the first part of the town, evidently inhabited by the Kṣatriyas.[527]

In summing up the available data, it is also possible to outline some general features typical of the *varṇa* and caste organisation in the *saṅghas* and *gaṇas*,[528] and to isolate the peculiarities that distinghished them from the monarchies.

The change in the form of polity did not involve any drastic change in the *varṇa* structure of society, although it left an imprint on the relations between the *varṇas* and their respective roles in social and political life. In the monarchies, the watershed ran between the free men and the slaves, on the one hand, and between the two higher and the two lower *varṇas*, the "twice-born" and the "once-born", on the other; in the non-monarchical states (republics), based also on a class division into free men and slaves with the position of the Śūdras greatly differing from that of all other *varṇas*, the juxtaposition was determined primarily by whether an individual was a Kṣatriya and whether he belonged to the leading Kṣatriya families. Between the 6th and 2nd centuries B.C., new features of the development of ancient Indian society became manifest in the *gaṇas* and the *saṅghas*, which strengthened the role of the military who took all power into their hands. This fact was reflected in Buddhist writings where the traditional Brāhmaṇic scheme of the four *varṇa* divisions (the Brāmaṇas, the Kṣatriyas, the Vaiśyas, the Śūdras) had assumed a new form : the Kṣatriyas, the Brāhmaṇas, the Vaiśyas, the Śūdras.

A Study of the *varṇa* and caste organisation in the *gaṇas* and *saṅghas*, which were full-fledged states, justifies the belief that the causes leading to the division of society into *varṇas* and to their subsequent stabilisation were the same as for the monarchical and non-monarchical states. These causes lay outside the sphere of political organisation, but stemmed from the specific stage in the historical development of society and its socio-economic basis.

Unfortunately, the causes which had led to the transformation of social groups (*varṇas*) into a closed caste organisation that assumed its most complete form in India are not yet clear,

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although some features of such an organisation can be observed among some other Indo-European peoples.

The existence of a *varṇa* division in those *gaṇas* and *saṅghas* in which the process of state formation was far from complete provides further evidence of the fact that the roots of this social phenomenon must also be sought in the society of the period preceding the migration of the Indo-Aryans into India.

Notes and References

1. See K.V. Rangaswami Aiyangar, *Aspect of Ancient Indian Economic Thought*, Varanasi, 1965, p. 14.
2. D.R. Chanana, 'The Spread of Agriculture in the Ganges Valley', *Contribution to Indian Economic History*, Delhi, 1963, pp. 101-118.
3. R.S. Sharma, *Light on Early Indian Society and Economy*, Bombay, 1966.
4. B. Ch. Sen, *Economics in Kauṭilya*, Calcutta, 1967; U.N. Ghoshal, *A History of Indian Public Life*, vol. II (The Pre-Maurya and the Maurya Periods), Oxford, 1966.
5. N.R. Banerjee, *The Iron Age in India*, Delhi, 1965, p. 224.

   See A. Ghosh, *The City in Early Historical India*, Simla, 1973. According to him, "archaeologically, the metal was coeval in the north with the Painted Grey Ware, as is amply attested at Hastināpura, Atranjikhera and Noh, all in the upper Ganga-Yamuna doāb, and Bairat to its west, though it is not necessary that at all these sites the earlier stage of the Ware is represented . . . the date 1025 ± 100 B.C. for a sample from the lower levels of Atranjikhera stands isolated at present and is not a sure ground for pushing back the first date to the twelfth, eleventh or tenth century B.C., though the need for further investigation may be stressed" (p. 5). "Iron was not known to the people of Atranjikhera in the Painted Grey Ware phase earlier than 800 B.C." (R.S. Sharma. 'Iron and Urbanization in the Ganga Basin', *The Indian Historical Review*, vol. I, No. 1, 1974). See also D.P. Agrawal, *The Copper Bronze Age in India*, New Delhi, 1971.
6. R.E.M., Wheeler, *Early India and Pakistan*, London, 1959, pp. 24, 163-164.
7. For more detail, see S.D. Singh, 'Iron in Ancient India', *JESHO*, vol. 5, pt. II, 1962, pp. 212-216; B.B. Lal, 'Excavation at Hastināpura . . .', *loc. cit.*
8. See N.R. Banerjee, 'The Excavations at Ujjain,' *Indologen-Tagung*, p. 78; Y.D. Sharma, 'Remains of Early Historical Cities' in *Archaeological Remains, Monuments and Museums*, pt I, Delhi, 1964, p. 69.
9. See J. Marshall, *Taxila*, vol. I, pp. 106-107; vol. III, pp. 162-167. G.F. Ilyin, *Drevny indiysky gorod Taksila* (*The Ancient Indian City of Taxila*), p. 26.
10. See *Age of the Nandas and Mauryas*, p. 267.
11. R.S. Sharma, 'La vie et l'organisation économiques dans l'Inde ancienne,' *Cahiers d'histoire mondiale*, t. 6, No. 2, 1960, p. 243.

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12. For more detail, see D.D. Kosambi, 'The Beginning of the Iron Age in India,' *JESHO*, vol. 4, pt. II, 1963, pp. 309-318. R.S. Sharma draws attention to the data of written sources (Pāṇini, Jaina texts) on the existence at the time of iron ploughshares, regarding it as a substantial innovation (R.S. Sharma, *Light . . . .*, p. 60).
13. R.E.M. Wheeler, 'Brahmagiri and Chandravalli 1947'; 'Megalithic and Other Cultures in the Chitaldrug District, Mysore State,' *AI*. No. 4, 1948.
14. N. Banerjee, *The Iron Age . . .*; W.A. Fairservis, *The Roots of Ancient India. The Archaeology of Early Indian Civilization*, New York, 1971.
15. For more details, see G.M. Bongard-Levin, G.F. Ilyin, *Drevnyaya Indiya* [*Ancient India*], ch. XII.
"South Bihar possessed copper and iron ores of good quality in abundance and therefore proved a paradise for the iron users, who may have profited from the technology of the copper users" (see R.S. Sharma, 'Iron and Urbanization in the Ganga Basin . . .', *loc. cit.*)
16. J.M. Datta, 'When the Agriculture was Introduced in India.'—*Man in India*, vol. 41, No. 2, 1966, pp. 139-146; *Agriculture in Ancient India*, New Delhi, 1964.
17. Strabo, XV. 1.20, XV.1. 42.
18. Pāṇini, IV. 3.45, 46.
19. M.M. Singh, *Life in North-Eastern India in Pre-Mauryan Times*, Delhi, 1967, p. 198.
20. V.S. Agrawala, *India as known to Pāṇini*, p. 195.
21. *VP*, I, 287.
22. For more details, see R. Gangopadhyay, *Some Materials for the Study of Agriculture and Agriculturists in Ancient India*, Calcutta, 1932.
23. Theophrastus, IV.4.10.
24. B.N. Puri, *India in the Time of Patañjali*, pp. 115-116.
25. *J.*, V. 37.
26. *J.*, III. 142; V. 405.
27. Far more details, see J.S. Haunuett, 'Agricultural and Botanical Knowledge of Ancient India, *Osiris*, vol. 9, 1950; pp. 211-226; L. Gopal, 'Sugar-making in Ancient India', *JESHO*, vol. 7, No. 1, 1964, pp. 56-72.
28. B.B. Lal, *Indian Archaeology since Independence*, Delhi, 1964, p. 21.
29. F.R. Allchin, 'Early Cultivated Plants in India and Pakistan,' in *The Domestication and Exploration of Plants and Animals*, ed. by P.Y. Ucko, G.M. Dimbleby, London, 1969, p. 327. On the discovery of rice grains in the layer of the second millennium B.C. in West Bengal, see Sri Paresh Chandra Das Gupta, *The Excavations at Panda Rajar Dhibi*, Calcutta, 1964. The widespread existence of rice in North India is to be inferred from frequent references to it in many sources beginning with Vedic literature. Suśruta distinguished no less than 39 varieties of rice (Om Prakash, *Food and Drinks in Ancient India*, Delhi, 1961, pp. 262-263).
30. *J.*, II. 167; V. 68; V.S. Agrawala, *India as Known to Pāṇini*, p. 199.
31. V.S. Agrawala, *India as Known to Pāṇini*, p. 198.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 199; B.N. Puri, *India in the Time of Patañjali*, p. 114; D.K. Kanjilal, the Picture, of Ancient India as Revealed in Patañjali's

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Mahābhāṣya, *IHQ*, vol. 31, No. 4, 1955, pp. 375-382.

33. Wells were mentioned as far back as the *Ṛgveda*. Water was drawn from them by means of strong ropes (X. 101.6) A.A. Macdonell and A.B. Keith (*Vedic Index of Names and Subjects*, vol. I. Varanasi, 1958, p. 214) believe that at the time of the *Ṛgveda*, there already existed irrigation canals.
34. Questions relating to artificial irrigation are dealt with in more detail in the *Dharmaśāstras*. This problem is also discussed at length in the *Arthaśāstra* and in later *Śāstras*, in particular, by Nārada (see L. Gopal, 'Irrigation-tax in Ancient India', *IHQ*, vol. 38, No. 1, 1962, pp. 65-71).
35. See *Dhammapada*.
36. V.S. Agrawala, *India as Known to Pāṇini*, p. 204.
37. *VP*, I, 287.
38. *Sam.* I. 1127; *Saptakumārika Avadāna* contains a reference to a large water reservoir in Magadha (B. Ch. Law, Geographical Data from Sanskrit Buddhist Literature,' *ABORI*, vol. 15, 1933-1934, p. 10).
39. *Cūllavagga*, VIII. 1.2; *Mahāvastu*, III. 176-177.
40. *EI*, VIII. 36; R.N. Mehta, 'Sudarśana Lake', *JOIB*, vol. 18, Nos. 1-2, 1968 pp. 20-28.
41. See A. Bose, 'Agriculture,' *IHQ*, vol. 10, No. 2, p. 298.
42. *Sum.*, II. 672-673.
43. A. Bose, *Social and Rural Economy . . .*, vol. I, pp. 101-102.
44. V.S. Agrawala, *India as Known to Pāṇini*, p. 153.
45. *Suttanipāta*, pp. 296-297, (*annadā baladā cetā vannadā sukhadā tathā*).
46. *J*, VI. 180-181.
47. *J*, IV. 253.
48. V.S. Agrawala, *India as Known to Pāṇini*, p. 223.
49. R.S. Sharma, *Light . . .*, p. 61.
50. Cited in A. Bose, *Social and Rural Economy . . .*, vol. I, p. 63.
51. Similar practice existed under the Mauryas. The V. Pillar Edict prohibits the branding of cattle on certain days only. This seems to imply that generally cattle-branding was widespread.
52. B.N. Puri, *India in the time of Patañjali*, p. 117.
53. R. Thapar, *Aśoka . . .*, p. 68.
54. The earlier *Dharmasūtras* tell specially of the severe punishment for slaughtering milch cows and draught animals (*Baudhāyana*, I. 10.4; R.S. Sharma, *Light . . .*, p. 61).
55. A. Bose, *Social and Rural Economy . . .*, vol. I, pp. 67-68.
56. V.S. Agrawala, *India as Known to Pāṇini*, pp. 139-141.
57. For more details, see B.B. Dutt, *Town-Planning in Ancient India*, Calcutta, 1925; D. Schlingloff, *Die altindische Stadt : eine vergleichende Untersuchung*, Mainz, 1970. See also A. Ghosh, *The City in Early Historical India* (ch. IV. 'The city in literature', ch. V, 'The archaeological evidence.')
58. V.S. Agrawala, *India as Known to Pāṇini*, pp. 137-143.
59. G.R. Sharma, *Excavations at Kauśāmbī . . .*, p. 41. According to A. Ghosh, "the conclusion is that Harappan urbanism could not have even remotely produced or inspired the historical urbanism, for the simple reason that there is no perceptible link between the Harappan and the later Indian

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cultures" (A. Ghosh, *The City in Early Historical India*, p. 85). R.S. Sharma writes: "Mr. Ghosh successfully demonstrates that no Harappan trait can be detected in the urban cultures of the Ganga valley. He rightly questions the ascription of the earliest Kauśāmbī fortification to 1000 B.C. and the notion of its Harappan affinities" (R.S. Sharma, 'Iron and Urbanization in the Ganga Basin', *loc. cit.*).

60. G.F. Ilyin, *Drevniy indiysky gorod Taksila* [*The Ancient Indian Town of Taxila*], pp. 12-13.
61. G.R. Sharma, *Excavations at Kauśāmbī . . .*, p. 31.
62. *anuśoṇaṃ pāṭaliputram*.
63. *Mahābhāṣya*, IV. 3.2.
64. See V.S. Agrawala, 'Mauryan Art : The Mauryan Palace at Pāṭaliputra', in his *Studies in Indian Art*, Varanasi, 1965, p. 57.
65. The foundations of the pillars were buried deep into the ground, since the pillars supported the roof. The pillars themselves were polished.
66. See D.S. Spooner, Mr. Ratan Tata's Excavations at Pataliputra, 'Annual Report of the Archaeological Survey of India', Calcutta, 1912-13.
67. For more details, see Steven G. Darian, 'The Economic History of the Ganges to the End of the Gupta Times', *JESHO*, vol. 13, pt. 1, 1670, pp. 62-87.
68. *Ind. Arch. 1955-1956, A Review*, Delhi, 1957, p. 19; *ibid.*, 1956-1957, Delhi, 1958, pp. 20-28; *ibid.*, 1957-1958, Delhi, 1959, pp. 32-56; N. Banerjee, 'The Excavations at Ujjain . . .' *loc, cit.*, p. 74-86.
69. Y.D. Sharma, 'Remains . . . .', *loc. cit.*, p. 69.
70. *DPPN*, vol. I, p. 982.
71. According to tradition, a *kror* is 10 million. Buddhaghoṣa's evidence certainly does not correspond to reality but it appears to confirm the existence of rumours about the high density of population at Śrāvastī. In this connection it is appropriate to cite sōme researchers' estimations of the population of the Indian subcontinent at the end of the 4th cent. B.C. According to J.M. Datta, it amounted to 181 million (J.M. Datta, 'Population of India about 320 B.C.', *Man in India*, vol. 42, No. 4, 1962, pp. 227-291, R. Thapar believes it to be an exaggeration, contending that 100 million is a more acceptable figure. (R. Thapar, *A History of India*, vol. I Penguin Books, of 1966, p. 27).
72. *Sār.* I. 241; *DPPN*, vol. II, 724.
73. For more details, see N. Wagle, *Society at the Time of the Buddha*, Bombay, 1967, pp. 23-29.
74. *J*, V. 511; *Arth.* II. 17.
75. Baudhāyana (II. 3.6.33) writes that "a person living in a fog-enveloped town cannot attain salvation".
76. A. Ray, *Villages, Towns and Secular Buildings in Ancient India*, Calcutta, 1964, p. 30.
77. See R.B. Pandey, 'Studies in the History of Kāśī : Economic Life', *JOIB*, vol. 29, 1963, pp. 19-20.
78. *Aṅg.—N.*, I. 248.
79. L. Gopal, 'Textiles in Ancient India,' *JESHO*, vol. 4, No. 1, 1961,

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pp. 53-69.

80. B.B. Lal, *Indian Archaeology . . .*, p. 24.
81. F.R. Allchin 'Upon the Antiquity and Methods of Gold Mining in Ancient India,' *JESHO*, vol. 5, No. 2, 1962, pp. 195-211. Copper mines were situated in the vicinity of Pāṭaliputra and in Chotanagpur. Scholars believe that the latter were exploited as far back as the time of Candragupta Maurya (cf. R.S. Sharma, *Light . . .*, p. 68).
82. A.S. Altekar, V. Mishra, *Report on Kumrahar . . .*
83. B.N. Puri, *India in the Time of Patañjali*, p. 108.
84. A. Bose, *Social and Rural Economy*, vol. II, p. 231.
85. G.L. Adhya, *Early Indian Economics*, Bombay, 1966, pp. 82-94.
86. *Ibid.*, pp. 85-86.
87. Even the *Dharmasūtras* assert that tradesmen and craftsmen live by their own "laws"—*Dharma* (Gautama, XI. 21).
88. For more details, see G. Yazdani, ed., *The Early History of the Deccan*, Oxford University Press, 1960.
89. See R. Thapar, *Aśoka . . .*, p. 73.
90. I..B. Keny, 'Magadhan Trade', *Indica* (The Indian Historical Research Institute, Silver Jubilee Commemoration Volume), Bombay, 1953, pp. 186-195.
91. V.S. Agrawala, *India as Known to Pāṇini*, p. 242.
92. For more detail, see V. Mishra, 'Sea and Land Trade Routes in India as Revealed in the Buddhist Literature', *JIH*, vol. 32, pt. II, 1954, pp. 117-127.
93. For more details, see *A Comprehensive History of India*, vol. 2, pp. 70-71.
94. H. Chakraborti, *Trade and Commerce of Ancient India (200 B.C.—650 A.D.)*, Calcutta, 1966, p. 25.
95. For more details, see H. Chakraborti, *Trade . . .*; R.E.M. Wheeler, *Rome beyond the Imperial Frontiers*, London, 1954; E.H. Warmington, *The Commerce between the Roman Empire and India*, Cambridge, 1928; Parmeshwari Lal Gupta, *Roman Coins from Andhra Pradesh*, Hyderabad, 1965.
96. For more details, see R. Mookerjee, *A History of Indian Shipping and Maritime Activity from the Earliest Times*, London, 1912; B. Ch. Chhabra, 'Navigation in Ancient India', *March of India*, Delhi, vol. 13, No. 10, 1961, pp. 26-29.
97. M.M. Singh, 'India's Overseas Trade as Known from the Buddhist Canon', *IHQ*, vol. 37, Nos. 2-3, 1961, pp. 177-182.
98. See E.M. Medvedev, 'Ob urovne geograficheskikh znaniy indiytsev v III-II vv. do n.e.' [The Level of Geographical Knowledge of Ancient Indians in the 3rd-2nd cent. B.C.'], *Kratkiye soobshcheniya instituta narodov Azii*, [*Brief Reports of the Institute of the Peoples of Asia*], No. 57, 1961, pp. 73-82.
99. W. Tarn, *The Greeks . . .*, p. 367.
100. *Ibid.*, p. 366.
101. For more detail, see A. Bose, *Social and Rural Economy . . .*, vol. II, ch. V; H. Chakraborti, *Trade . . .*; M. Khvostov, *Istoriya vostochnoi torgovli*

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greko-rimskogo Yegipta [*History of the Oriental Trade of the Graeco-Roman Egypt*], Kazan, 1907, pp. 114-147.

102. At a ceremonial procession Antiochus IV (175-163 B.C.) exhibited 80 elephant tusks brought from India. This was reported by Athenaeus (see W. Tarn, *The Greeks . . .*, p. 367).
103. K.V. Hariharan, 'Some Aspects of Ancient Indian Ship-building and Navigation', *Journal of the University of Bombay*, vol. 34, pts 1-4, 1965-1966, pp. 26-42; L. Gopal, 'Art of Ship-building and Navigation in Ancient India', *University of Allahabad* Studies (Ancient History Section), Allahabad, 1959.
104. L. Gopal, 'The Right of Minting Coins in Ancient India', *Journal of Andhra Historical Research Society*, vol. 26, Nos. 1-4, 1960-1961, pp. 149-151.
105. See, for example, G.R. Sharma, *The Excavations at Kauśāmbī, . . .*, p. 81.
106. B. B. Lal, *Indian Archaeology . . .*, pp. 13, 18-39; P.L. Gupta, *The Amaravati Hoard of Silver Punch-marked Coins*, Hyderabad, 1963.
107. See R. Thapar, *Aśoka . . .*, p. 242.
108. E. Rapson, *Indian Coins*, Strassburg, 1897, pp. 3-5.
109. See, for example, V.S. Agrawala, *India as Known to Pāṇini*, p. 262.
110. D.D. Kosambi, *An Introduction to the Study of Indian History*, Bombay, 1956; by the same author, *The Cultute and Civilization of Ancient India*, in Historical Outline London, 1965.
111. R. Thapar proposes different interpretations of the symbols of the Mauryan kings (cf. R. Thapar, *Aśoka . . .*, p. 248).
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113. See K.P. Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*, pp. 144, 147; by the same author, 'Early Signed Coins of India', *JBORS*, vol. 20, No. 4, 1934.
114. For more details, see Charan Das Chatterji, 'Numismatic Data in Pāli Literature,' *BS*, Calcutta, 1931.
115. See V.S. Agrawala, *India as Known to Pāṇini*, pp. 274-279.
116. *EI*, VIII, pp. 82-83.
117. I.M. Dyakonov, 'Problemy sobstvennosti. O strukture obshchestva Blizhnego Vostoka do serediny II tysyacheleliya do n.e.' Problems of Property. On the Structure of Society in the Middle East up to the Middle of the 2nd Millennium B.C., *Vestnik drevney istorii* [*Bulletin of Ancient History*], No. 4, 1967, pp. 13-35; by the same author, 'Osnovnyiye cherty ekonomiki v monarkhiyakh drevney Zapadnoi Azii ['Main Features of the National Economy in Monarchies of Ancient West Asia'],— Narody Azii i Afriki" Peoples of Asia and Africa, No. 1, 1966.
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120. *Obshcheye i osobennoye v istoricheskom razvitiyi stran Vostoka* [*General and Specific Aspects in the Historic Development of the Countries of the East*], ed. by G.F. Kim Moscow, 1966; Yu. I. Semyonov, 'Problema sotsialno-economicheskogo stroya drevnego Vostoka' [The Problem of the Socio-Economic System of the Ancient East'], *Narody Asii i Afriki* [*Peoples of Asia and Africa*], No. 4, 1965.
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123. K.P. Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity* p. 24; A.S. Altekar, *A History of Village Communities in Western India*, Bombay-Calcutta-Madras, 1927, pp. 80-87; U.N. Ghoshal, *The Agrarian System in Ancient India*, Calcutta, 1930, pp. 96-98; by the same author, *Contribution to the History of the Hindu Revenue System*, Calcutta, 1929, pp. 168-170; P.N. Banerjee, *Public Administration in Ancient India*, London, 1916, p. 179; P.V. Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra*, vol. II, p. 866; *The Vākāṭaka-Gupta Age* (*circa 200-550 A.D.*), by R. Ch. Majumdar and A.S. Altekar, Banaras, 1954, p. 362; G.L. Adhya, *Early Indian Economics*, p. 25.
124. See G.S. Men, *Selskiye obshchiny na Vostoke i Zapade* [*Village Communities in the East and in the West*, St. Petersburg, 1874, pp. 7, 23-24, 62, etc.; R.C. Majumdar, *The Corporate Life in Ancient India*, Calcutta, 1933, pp. 186-193. A Altekar wrote about the right to the ownership of cultivated land enjoyed by private persons or families (*The Vākāṭaka Gupta Age*, p. 333).
125. For more details, see J. Jolly, *Recht und Sitte* (*Gründriss der Indo-Arischen Philologie und Altertumskunde*), Strassburg, 1896, p. 90.
126. For more details, see J.D. Derrett, *Religion, Law and the State in India*, London, 1968, p. 130.
127. See S.K. Maity, *The Economic Life . . .*, p. 12; U.N. Ghoshal, *The Agrarian System . . .* p. 85.
128. The "Manava Dharmaśāstra" (VIII. 200) say : "Where mere possession (*saṃbhoga*) is evident but no title (*āgama*) is seen, there the title [should be] proof [of ownership]—and not the possession: such is the rule."
129. *Āgamena Viśuddhena bhogo yāti pramāṇatām aviśuddhāgamo bhogaḥ prāmāṇyam naiva gacchati*, The same idea is found in Bṛhaspati (VII. 24-26).
130. Nārada, I, 86-87: *bhogam kevalato yastu kīrtayennāgamaṃ kvacit | bhogacchalāpadeśena sa vijñeyastu taskaraḥ; ānagamaṃ tu yo bhuṅkte bahūnyabdaśatānyapi| cauradaṇḍena taṃ pāpaṃ daṇḍayetpṛthivīpatiḥ ||.*
131. See A. Bose, 'Agriculture,' *IHQ*, vol. 10, No. 2, 1934. p. 288.
132. *Sabbe to paṭhaviṃ nissāye paṭhaviyaṃ paṭiṭṭhāya. . .*
133. *Sthānucchedasya kedāram āhuḥ śalyavato mṛgaṃ.*
134. *koci puriso vanaṃ sodhetvā bhūmiṃ nīharati, tassa sā bhūmīti jano voharati*

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ṇa c'esā bhūmi tena pavattitā taṃ bhūmiṃ kāraṇaṃ karvā bhūmisāmiko nāma hoti, IV, 5.15, p. 219.

135. For more details, see L. Gopal, 'Ownership of Agricultural Land in Ancient India, *JESHO*, vol. 4, No. 3, 1961, pp. 240-241.
136. For example, *J*, IV. 281, III. 301. The Jaina sources contain numerous references to the existence of individual land ownership (A. Bose 'Agriculture,' *loc. cit.* p. 291).
137. 1 *karisa* was equivalent to approximately 0.25 hectare.
138. *Sār.* I, 242.
139. D.R. Chanana, *Slavery in Ancient India.*
140. See, for instance, N.N. Kher, 'Land Sale in Ancient India (321 B.C.—320 A.D.),' *JOIB*, vol. 12, No. 3, 1963 pp. 259-263.
141. Donation of land was considered a very laudable act. Sources contain numerous references to that effect (for more detail, see P.V. Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra*, vol. II, pt II, p. 857-859).
142. *Ibid.*, pp. 858-859.
143. We follow G. Bühler's interpretation (*Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. II, pt. I, 1879, p. 111).
144. For more detail, see R.S. Sharma, *Indian Feudalism: AD 300-1200*, Calcutta, 1964.
145. *EI*, VII, p. 61.
146. *EI*, VIII, pp. 78-79.
147. *Ibid.*, p. 77.
148. G.L. Adhya, *Early Indian Economics*, p. 25. According to Baudhāyana (III.2.2-4), one Brāhmaṇa had 6 *nivartanas* of land (see P.V. Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra*, vol. II, pt. II, p. 859).
149. *EI*, XXIV, p. 55. For the position of the landowners in the times of the Sātavāhanas and the Vākāṭakas, see Dipakranjan Das, *Economic History of the Deccan*, Delhi, 1969, pp. 26-51.
150. *EI*, VIII, pp. 78-79.
151. The Russian translation is not satisfactory : "in the absence of the authorities" see, *Arthaśāstra ili Nauka politiki*, ed. by V.I. Kalyanov, Moscow, Leningrad, 1959, p. 280.
152. Kauṭilya included a house, a field, a garden, an embankment, a tank, a reservoir in real estate (*vāstu*) (III. 8).
153. Similar evidence is found also in other *Śāstras* (see S.A.Q. Husaini, *The Economic History of India*, vol. I (From the Earliest Times to the Formation of Feudalism), Calcutta, 1962, p. 74.
154. "If the proprietors of a field are unable to till [it], have deceased or departed, then he who, upon permission [of relatives or neighbours], tills that field, may reap all the crop from it" [XI. 23]; "if, however, in the time when the field is being tilled [by others], the proprietor returns, let him take back his land after he pays [to this man] all his expenses on the tilling of the land." (XI. 24).
155. *kṣetrasīmāvivādeṣu sāmantebhyo viniścayaḥ / nagaragrāmagaṇino ye ca vṛddhatamā narāḥ // XI. 2.*
156. *gṛhakṣetravivādeṣu sāmantebhyo viṇirnāyaḥ / nāgaragrāma gaṇino ye ca*

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vṛddhatamā narāḥ ||.

157. L. Gopal, 'Sāmanta, its Varying Significance in Ancient India, *JRAS*, 1963, pts 1-2, pp. 21-37.
158. Kātyāyana, 734 : see D.N. Jha, *Revenue System . . .*, p. 11.
159. *Arth.*, III. 9; Kangle, II, 253.
160. See K. Marx, 'Forms Preceding the Capitalist Production', in K. Marx, F. Engels, *Collected Works*, vol. 46, pt. I, p. 466 (Russ. ed.).
161. In reality the disputes in the communities over land are unlikely to have often led to its confiscation by the state. The communities vigorously protected their right over land.
162. Explaining a *śloka* of Manu (VII. 365), Medhātithi stated that the king should be impartial in setting a new boundary. It is hardly probable that this requirement was observed in practice.
163. L. Gopal notes that when Medhātithi speaks of the king as the lord of land he does not mean the owner of all arable land but the ruler whose power extends to everything in the country (see L. Gopal, *The Economic Life of Northern India*, Delhi-Varanasi, 1965, p. 4).
164. For More detail, see U.N. Ghoshal, *A History of Indian Political Ideas*, Oxford, 1959.
165. For more details, see D.N. Jha, *Revenue System . . .* pp. 18-19; E.W. Hopkins, 'The Social and Military Position of the Ruling Caste in Ancient India', *JAOS*, vol. 13, 1889, pp. 85-87.
166. J. Gonda, *Ancient Indian Kingship from the Religious Point of View*, Leyden, 1966, p. 11. According to Nīlakaṇṭha, for example, the king does not own the whole of the land, but as the conqueror and protector executes his power by levying taxes. This idea is also reflected in more recent commentator (K.P. Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*, pp. 334-335).
167. J. Gonda, *Ancient Indian Kingship . . .*, p. 11.
168. *Mbh.*, I. 213.6; see J. Gonda, *Ancient Indian Kingship*, p. 11.
169. P.V. Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra*, vol. II, pt. II, p. 868.
170. Plots allotted to some categories of Brāhmaṇas on the state-owned land had a different status, for the state remained their proprietor (cf. *Arth.*, II. 1 and III. 10).
171. "The State had an undivided right to the revenues from a village. That is why the grants of villages or of specified shares thereof, which mean the right to the revenue or a part of the revenue from the villages, are made only by the king" (L. Gopal, 'On Feudal Polity in Ancient India', *JIH*, vol. 41, pt. II, 1963, p. 410).
172. See J.D.M. Derrett, 'Bhū-baraṇa, Bhū-pālana, Bhū-bhojana; an Indian Conundrum', *BSO(A)S*, vol. 22, pt. 1, 1959, pp. 108-123.
173. D.C. Sircar, ed., *Land System and Feudalism in Ancient India*, Calcutta, 1966, p. 58.
174. In the *Arthaśāstra* this term occurs more than twenty times in conjunction with an enumeration of the duties of the supervisor of royal estates (*sītā-dhyakṣa*). In this case *svabhūmi* means "king's land," although some translators (e.g., J. Mayer) suggest a different interpretation: "on well ploughed land". Kangle, II. 1.49 suggests "on land suitable for the crop

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to be sown", but he admits also the other translation as was proposed by Johnston. Johnston (*JRAS*, 1929, pp. 90-91) gives "on crown lands".

175. This issue is discussed at length in E. Ritschl, M. Schetelich, 'Zu einigem Problemen der Eigentumsver-haltnisse (speziell Grund und Boden) im Kauṭilīya Arthaśāstra', *Mitteilungen des Institutes für Orientforschung*, Bd XI, f. 2, 1966, pp. 301-337; W. Ruben, *Die gesellschaftliche Entwicklung im alten Indien, Bd* I : *Die Entwicklung der Produktionverhaltnisse*, Berlin, 1967, pp. 137-140.
See also E. Ritschl, M. Schetelich, *Studien zum Kauṭilīya Arthaśāstra* Berlin, 1973.
176. Breloer believed erroneously that *sītādhyakṣa* was responsible for the tilling of fields and the reaping of crops all over the country and not only on the crown land proper (B. Breloer, *Kauṭalīya Studien*, Bd I, pp. 74-79). For criticism of this view, see Kangle, III, pp. 169-170.
177. Pāṇini (VI.2.63) and the *Jātakas* (V. 290) mention royal potters (*rāja-kulāla, rāja-kumbhakāra*); and the *Jātakas*, also royal gardeners (*rāja-mālākāra*, V. 292).
178. Cf. Megasthenes' statement (rendered by Strabo) that land tillers received the fourth part of the produce. Obviously, in the second case, too, royal tenants are meant.
179. The commentator Nandapaṇḍita interpreted the term *ārdhika* as "the one who gives the king half the proceeds from his fields" (D.N. Jha, *Revenue System* . . ., p. 114).
Judging by the *Arthaśāstra* (II. 1), these tenants rented plots on royal estates, but according to Manu (lV. 253) and Yājñavalkya (I. 166), from private landowners. The commentator Bhaṭṭasvāmin explained *ardha-sīrika* as *grāmyakuṭumbinaḥ*, which may point to their being *Vaiśyas* who had become poor and landless ('The Pratipadapañcikā, a Commentary on 2.8.5 to 2.36.47 by Bhaṭṭāsvāmin', ed. by K.P. Jayaswal, A. Banerji-Sastri, *JBORS*, vol. 12, 1929, p. 137). R.S. Sharma thinks that they were *Śūdras* (R.S. Sharma, *Śūdras in Ancient India*, Delhi, 1959, p. 150).
180. B.Ch. Sen, *Economics in Kauṭilya*, pp. 22-23.
181. See. H. Scharfe, *Untersuchungen* . . ., p. 282.
182. L. Gopal, Ownership . . . , *loc. cit.*, pp. 253-254.
183. *EI*, VIII, pp. 71-73.
184. In the text : "our field".
185. This confirms the *Arthaśāstra* evidence that uncultivated plots from the stock of state lands could be taken away by the king (II. 1).
186. *EI*, VIII, pp 73-75.
187. According to the first inscription, the plot of the king's land in the village was equal to 200 *nivartanas* (about 240 hectares).
188. See U.N. Ghoshal, *Contribution* . . ., pp. 30-31; L. Gopal, 'Ownership . . .', *loc. cit.*, p. 255.
189. B. Ch. Sen, *Economics in Kauṭilya*, p. 19.
190. Some scholars hold that this text tells of Śūdras and agriculturists. The commentary *Nītirṇīṭi* tells of Śūdras – husbandmen; the second interpretation is offered by the *Bhāṣāvyākhyānam* commentary. Kangle (II, p. 55)

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accepts the version of the former commentary.

191. *Kulaśat-āvaraṃ pañcaśata-kulaparaṃ grāmaṃ.*
192. According to the *Jayamaṅgalā* commentary, every side of a village was to measure 4 *krośas*, i.e. its total area must have been about 56 sq. km. Of these, 10 *krośas* was occupied by fields, five by houses and pasture, one by the "temple" (*devasthāna*) and common land (Kangle, II, p. 55).
193. L. Gopal, 'On Feudal Polity...', *loc. cit.*
194. Lit. "for one generation" (Kangle, II, p. 56).
195. Kangle, III, p. 168.
196. *Karada* seems to have designated both tax payers in the broad sense (*Arth.* III.10) and tenants of the state lands (as distinguished from the full and rightful members of the community—land proprietors). *Kara* is mentioned in the *Arthaśāstra* (II.15) among the taxes raised from the country (*rāṣṭra*) as opposed to the revenue from *sītā* (royal estate). Bhaṭṭasvamin explained it as a regular annual tax paid throughout several months (cited from: U.N. Ghoshal, *Contribution...*, p. 36). U.N. Ghoshal (*ibid.*, p. 65) believes that *kara* was a periodical tax levied primarily on cultivated land (over and above the usual king's share in the crops). It might have designated taxes in general as well as the imposts other than *bhāga*. Evidently, the tenants in this case paid all kinds of taxes instituted for the state lands (see D.N. Jha, *Revenue System...*, pp. 47-48).
197. Inviting free tenants to newly developed lands (but not to the *sītā*, the royal estates, where control was stricter) was very profitable. It was only in exceptional cases that (judging by the *Arthaśāstra*) the king resorted to village labourers and traders so as not to lose the established revenue and to further the growth of the treasury (*Arth.* II.1). The status of the *grāmabhṛtakas* is not quite clear. Kangle (III, pp. 196-197) believes them to be the lower officials of the provincial administration in villages, for, according to Kauṭilya, they received a salary. R.S. Sharma also regards the *gramabhṛtakas* as village officials (R.S. Sharma, *Śūdras...*, p. 148). B. Ch. Sen (*Economics in Kauṭilya*, p. 18) believes that these "servants of villages" were given land instead of a salary and had to till their plots. Traders were evidently engaged in husbandry themselves but merely saw to it being carried out, drawing some revenue as a result and handing a fixed quota to the state.
198. It is noteworthy that the text tells of the exemption from the impost of the *kara* type, different from the usual "king's share" (*ṣaḍbhāga*). It is possible that this implied exemption from taxation imposed on the state lands.
199. This interpretation was accepted by A.I. Vostrikov "*Arthasastra*" *ili Nauka politiki* ["*Arthaśāstra*", *or the Science of Polity*], p. 53. He followed the reading *abhirūpadāyakāni* of the Malayalam manuscript and the "Grantha manuscript", however, R.P. Kangle, while not objecting to this translation in the sense of "worthy of gifts" or "yielding suitable revenue", still does not think that it corresponds to the meaning in which it is used in the original.

Proceeding from other manuscripts and commentaries, he suggests the

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reading *abhirūpadāyādakāni*, and translates : "with inheritance passing on to corresponding heirs" (Kangle, II, p. 56). The commentary *Nītirnīti* explains this passage as "transition of the land" to heirs of the same type as the person to whom the gift had been originally made, i.e., evidently, to certain groups of Brahmans alone.

200. Kangle, III, p. 771.
201. Some sources report that only certain Brāhmaṇas (Śrotriyas in particular) were exempt from taxes (e.g., *Āpastamba*). This passage from the *Arthaśāstra* also speaks of *Śrotriyas* (for more details, see D.N. Jha, *Revenue System...*, p. 124).
202. For *bhoga* in the sense of "royal territory", see D.N. Jha, *Revenue System...*, p. 148. As regards later inscriptions, a different interpretation can be offered for *rāja-bhoga* (lit. "king's pleasure") : transfer of the right to raise taxes, which belonged to the king. In a number of sources the term *bhoga* is used to designate a certain kind of impost (see R.S. Sharma, *Indian Feudalism...*, pp. 17-18).
203. *Dīg.-N.*, I.1.1; XII.1.1.
204. *EI*, 12, p. 173; *CII*, 3, p. 235.
205. *CII*, 3, p. 236, *SI*, p. 422.
206. For more details, see E.M. Medvedev, 'Evolutsiya i formy indiyskikh darstvennykh gramot i ikh proiskhozhdeniye (III-XII vv.)', ['Evolution and Forms of Indian Bestowal Settlements and Their Origin (3rd-12th Cent.)'], *Istoriya i kultura drevney Indii [History and Culture of Ancient India]*; ed. by W. Ruben, V. Struve, G. Bongard-Levin, Moscow, 1963, by the same author, K. voprosu o formakh zemledeliya v Severnoi Indii v VI-VII vv. n.e. ['On the Forms of Land Husbandry in North India in the 6th-7th Cent. A.D.'], *Problemy vostokovedeniya* [*Problems of Oriental Studies*], No. 1, 1959.
207. Very interesting data referring to a later time have been preserved in Buddhaghoṣa's commentary (e.g., *Sam.*, VI.1246-1247). containing a lengthy description of the property of the monasteries including their landed estates (see also S. Dutt, *Buddhist Monks and Monasteries of India*, London, 1962).
208. B. Ch. Sen, *Economics in Kauṭilya*, p. 130.
209. See U.N. Ghoshal, *Contribution...*, p. 37.
210. See, for instance K.P. Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*, pp. 330-335; P.V. Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra*, vol. II, pp. 865-866; L. Gopal, 'Ownership..., *loc. cit.*, S.K. Maity, *The Economic Life...*, pp. 21-22.
211. See A.M. Osipov, *Kratky ocherk istorii Indii do X v.* [*A Brief Outline of the History of India Prior up to the 10th Century*], Moscow, 1948, p. 54.
212. See L. Skurzak, *Megasthenes* (Frg. 1.46, 33, 5).—"Istoriya i kultura drevney Indii" ["History and Culture of Ancient India"], pp. 258-261.
213. R. Thapar, *Aśoka . . .*, p. 63.
214. At the same time, some Indian scholars realise the importance of studies relating to Indian village community. As A.S. Altekar has put it the real history of India is the history of its village communities (A.S. Altekar, *A History of Communities in Western India*, Oxford, 1927, p. 111).

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215. Soviet authors attach great importance to this issue. See I.M. Dyakonov, 'Obschina na drevnem Vostoke v rabotakh sovetskikh issledovateley' [The Community in the Ancient Orient in Works by Soviet Scholars'], *Vestnik drevney istorii* [*Bulletin of Ancient History*], No. 1, 1963, pp. 16-34 (this paper also gives relevant bibliography); L.B. Alayev, *Yuzhnaya Indiya* [*South India*]; E.M. Medvedev, *Opyt issledovaniya drevneindiyskoi obshchiny po dannym toponimiki*, [*Essay on the Study of the Ancient Indian Community on the Basis of Toponymics*], "Indiyā v drevnosti"/"India in Ancient Times"/editors N.V. Struve, G. K. Bongard-Levin) Moscow, 1964; *Obshchina i sotsialnaya organizatsiya u narodov Vostochnoi i Yugo-Vostochnoi Azii,*] *The Community and the Social Organisation among Peoples of East and South-East*]; Leningrad, 1967; *Istoriya Indii v sredniye veka* [*History of India and the Middle Ages*], Moscow, 1968.
216. I.M. Dyakonov, 'Obshchina na drevnew Vostoke . . .,' *loc. cit.*, p. 17.
217. G.M. Bongard-Levin, G.F. Ilyin, *Drevnyaya Indiya* [*Ancient India*], p. 363.
218. "It is necessary to take into account the local peculiarities of the community organisations, determined by the specific historical, geographical and ethnic factors, in particular by the isolation of some areas. Thus, simultaneous existence of different types of community is possible at each historical stage . . ." (E.M. Medvedev, 'Opyt issledovaniya drevneindiyskoi obshchiny . . ., *loc. cit.*, p. 218).
219. See *Arth.*, II.1.
220. N. Wagle, *Society at the Time of the Buddha*, pp. 13-18.
221. A little village was called *gāmaka* (*VP*, 1.208).
222. *Arth.* III.9; *J*, II.358; B.Ch. Sen, *Economics in Kauṭilya*, p.130. The problem of boundaries was so important that, according to the *Arthaśāstra* (III.9), a dispute on this subject between two villages could be settled by the verdict passed by the residents of five or ten neighbouring villages.
223. For more details, see V.S. Agrawala, *India as Known to Pāṇini*, pp. 141-143; M. Singh, *Life . . .*, pp. 193-196.
224. A. Ray, *Villages . . . .*, p.29.
225. *J*, II. 109-110. The *Jātaka* tells of a plot of arable land (*yavakhetta*—"barley field"), which was under the collective supervision of all villagers.
226. Judging by the *Arth.* (II.1), the king was to allot for pasture lands unfit for ploughing.
227. One of the *Jātakas* (II.76) mentions a fruit tree owned by a whole village.
228. Among the principal sources of revenue received by the "superintendent of the store" (II.15), mention is made of the *Piṇḍakara* tax, which, in the commentator Bhaṭṭasvāmin's opinion, was common tax levied on villages (U.N. Ghoshal, *Contribution . . .*, p. 37).
229. The significance of this point is underlined by R.S. Sharma, *Indian Feudalism . . .*, pp. 62-63).
230. See for example, *J*, I.227; III. 162-163.
231. V.S. Agrawala, *India as Known to Pāṇini*, p. 141.
232. Manu, VIII.245, 262-265; *Arth.* III. 9-10. According to the *Arthaśāstra* (V.2), for stealing another man's crop, the thief, if he was a member of the same community, was to compensate 50 times over; if he belonged to

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another community, he was to be put to death.

233. See I.M. Dyakonov, *Obshchina na drevnem vostoka...*, pp. 16-34.
234. B.N. Puri, *India in the Time of Patañjali* pp. 108-109.
235. P.V. Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra*, vol. 3, p. 154.
236. From the Sanchi inscriptions, dated from the 3rd-2nd cent. B.C., we know about a collective gift to Buddhist communities by the residents of a village. Similar evidence is contained in the inscriptions from Bhaṭṭiprolu (*EI*, vol. 2, pp. 87, 232 & ff.)
237. For women's participation in collective work, see *J*, I. 199.201. The more recent *Bṛhaspati-Smṛti* lists the kinds of work carried out by all community members : repairs to the assembly hall and the temple, cleaning the garden, the pond, etc.
238. P.V. Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra*, vol. III, pp. 156-157.
239. *Gautama*, X.31-32; *Viṣṇu*, III.32.
240. For more details, see *JBORS*, vol. 12, p. 198; R.S. Sharma, *Śūdras, loc. cit.*, pp. 151-152.
241. *J.*, III.8.
242. *grāmam abhyupetya*, see Kangle, II, p. 259. The text specially stresses that the community itself (*grāma eva*) was invested with the right to punish.
243. For the data of the *Jātakas*, see U.N. Ghoshal, *A History of Indian Public Life*, vol. II, pp, 164-165.
244. A. Bose, *Social and Rural Economy . . .*, vol. I, p. 43.
245. K.P. Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*, pp. 195-197.
246. In the *Arthaśāstra* (V. 3), payment of 500 *paṇas* to *grāmabhṛtakas* ("servants of the village" ?) is mentioned. R. Kangle supposes that the text might pertain to the *grāmika*, the head of the village (Kangle, III. p. 197).
247. Here *kūla* is a certain plot of land.
248. *Milindapāñho*, p. 147.
249. For more details, see K.P. Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*; R.S. Sharma, *Aspects of Political Ideas...* ; A.S. Altekar, *State and Government in Ancient India*, p. 161.
250. *J*, III.281.
251. *J*, I.18; *J*.III.89.
252. The impoverished members of a community ceded their plots for temporary usage and, unable to reimburse the necessary sum on expiration of the time agreed, lost them, i.e. they practically ceased to be full and rightful members of the community. The *Arthaśāstra* says that if a temporary tenant used an immovable asset (land) for twenty years, the right of the proprietor could pass over to him. Irrigation embankments (*setubandha*) passed to new owner after five years (III.9).
253. Dev Raj Chanana, *Slavery in Ancient India*, New Delhi, 1960; W. Ruben, *Die Lage der Sklaven in altindischen Gesellschaft*, 1957; by the same author, *Dis gesellschaftliche Entwicklung im alten Indien*, Berlin, Bd I (1967), Bd II (1968); Y. Bongert, 'Réflexions sur le problème de l'esclavage dans l'Inde

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ancienne a propos de quelques ouvrages récents, *BEFEO*, t, LI, No. 1, 1963, pp. 143-194.

254. A.M. Osipov, *Kratky ocherk...*; D.A. Suleikin, 'Osnovniye voprosy periodizatsii istorii drevney Indii' ['Basic Problems of the Periodisation of the History of Ancient India'], *Uchenye zapiski Tikhookeanskogo instituta* [*Transactions of the Pacific Institute*], v. II, 1949; G.F. Ilyin, 'Shudry i raby v drevneindiyskikh sbornikakh zakonov' ['Śūdras and Slaves in Ancient Indian Codes of Laws'], *Vestnik drevney istorii* [*Bulletin of Ancient History*], No. 2, 1950; by the same author, 'Osobennosti rabstva v drevney Indii' ['Features of Slavery in Ancient India'], *Vestnik drevney istorii* [*Bulletin of Ancient History*], No. 1, 1951; 'Osnovniye problemy rabstva v drevney Indii' ['Basic Problems of Slavery in Ancient India'], *Istoriya i kultura drevney Indii* [*History and Culture of Ancient India*]; G.M. Bongard-Levin, G.F. Ilyin, 'Predisloviye k knige D.R. Chanany "Rabstvo v drevney Indii ['Foreword' to D.R. Chanana's *Slavery in Ancient India*]; E.M. Medvedev, 'K voprosu o sotsialno-ekonomischeskom stroye drevney Indii' ['On the Socio-Economic System of Ancient India'], *Narody Azii i Afriki* [*Peoples of Asia and Africa*], No. 6, 1966, pp. 65-77.

255. E.M. Medvedev, 'K. voprosu..., *loc cit.*, by the same author, '*Feodalniye otnosheniya v drevney i srednevekovoi Indii* [*Feudal Relations in Ancient and Medieval India*'], *Narody Azii i Afriki* [*Peoples of Asia and Africa*], No. 3, 1970.

256. G.M. Bongard-Levin, G.F. Ilyin, *Drevnyaya India*, p. 334.

257. Interesting data on slaves, and the use of slave labour in agriculture are found in the *Śrauta-sūtras* (for moré detail, see R.S. Sharma, *Śūdras...*, p. 46).

258. *Maj.-N.*, II.149; see also *Pap.*, III.409. The term *dāsa* was often used to denote various categories of slaves includinging those who had fallen into dependence for a fixed period and were actually in temporary service. *Dāsyu* denoted status of dependence in general.

259. *puriso dāso assa anattādhīno parādhīno na yenakamaṅgāmo, so aparena samayena tamhā dāsabyā mucceyya attādhīno aparādhīno bhujisso yenakāmaṅgāmo*; *Maj.-N.* I.275.

260. *Pap.*, II.318.

269. Cf. in Aristophanes : "For a slave dare not possess his own body, he who has bought us, to him we are entrusted by God."

262. *Nārada*, V.29.

263. *J*, I.341; V.223; *Gautama*, XXVIII.13. Cf. in Aristotle : "A slave is a certain animate object of property" (*Polity*, I.4.2).

264. Buddhist sources mention prices of slaves, men and women: *J*, I.299—of a slave woman, 100 *kārṣāpaṇas*; III.343—a Brahman saved 700 *kārṣāpaṇas* for the purchase of slaves; VI.577-1,000 *kārṣāpaṇas* for a king's slave. Jaina texts tell of slave women brought from other countries. They were dressed in their traditional dress (J. Jain, *Life...*). The Buddha forbade the lay Buddhists to sell and buy living beings (*Aṅg.-N.*, III-20), but, evidently, such things happened. Buddhaghoṣa explained that trade in living beings meant selling people (*sattavaṇijjā ti mauussavikkayo*;

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Manoratha-pūraṇi). According to the *Dharmasūtras*, a Brāhmaṇa, even pressed by indigence, was prohibited to trade in human beings. The same was set forth by Manu (X.86) and by the more recent *Yājñavalkya* (II.36-38). However, Sūtras allowed Brāhmaṇas to barter slaves for slaves *Āpastamba*, I.7.20.15; *Vaśiṣṭha*, II.39; *Gautama*, VII.16).

265. *J.*, No. 92, cf. *Arth.* I.21.
266. *Cūllavaṃsa*, VI.4.2.
267. *J*, II.428; III.101; V.105; VI.117.
268. The number of slaves in ancient India is a subject of scholarly discussion (for more details, see G.M. Bongard-Levin, G.F. Ilyin, *Drevnyaya Indiya*, pp. 351-352). In this connection, Dhammapāla's commentary on the *Theragāthā* (No. 55) may be cited. It tells of a slave woman from Vārāṇasī as the principal slave among 500 others : *Vārāṇasīyaṃ pañcannaṃ dāsīsatanaṃ jeṭṭhakā* (*Paramattha-Dīpanī Theragāthā-Aṭṭhakathā*, vol. I, London, 1946, p. 140).
269. *Maj. N.*, I.344; I.125-126.
270. *J.*, I.451.
271. *J.*, I.451, 458.
272. For more details, see A. Bose, *Social and Rural Economy...*, vol. II, pp. 416-417.
273. See Y. Bongert, 'Réflexions...', *loc. cit.*, p. 161.
274. *Karamarānīto*—lit "he who had to die from the hand (of an enemy)." Buddhaghoṣa explains the origin of this kind of slaves : "If a free man has been brought from a foreign country after his capture or if in his own country some insurgent village has been sacked on the king's order and people have been brought from there, they are all slaves, be they men or women" (Sam. III.1000).
275. See L. Gopal, *The Economic Life...*, p. 78.
276. *J.*, VI.285.
277. *J.*, I.200; IV.22.99; VI.545-548. D.R. Chanana believed that at an earlier stage of social development in India, there existed two types of slaves: prisoners of war (i.e. persons brought from another region) and those made slaves for debts, because of a famine, etc. (D.R. Chanana, *Slavery in Ancient India...*).
278. Jaina texts mention six kinds : born in the house, purchased, debtors, those who had enslaved themselves because of hunger, enslaved for non-payment, prisoners of war (see J. Jain, *Life...*).
279. In this verse seven groups of slaves are listed, but in other *ślokas* (XI.60, 62) two more are mentioned.
280. *Arth.* III.13. The *śāstras* often mention the following categories of slaves : "slave for food", "slave for a fixed time period", "slave given food during a famine".
281. *The Vinaya-Piṭaka* (III.15) contains a story of how, having listened to important news brought by a slave woman, her mistress said, "If you told me the truth, I will set you free" (*adāsī*; lit. "I will make you a non-slave"). See also *Paramattha-Dīpanī Theragāthā-Aṭṭhakathā*, vol. II, p. 220.

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282. For farming those given into slavery, see *J.*, VI.546. As for the emancipation of slaves born in the house, purchased or received as a gift or inherited, it usually depended entirely on their owner's will (cf. data in *Nārada* (V.29) on these four categories of slaves for life).
283. For more details, see U.N. Ghoshal, *Studies...*, p. 471-478.
284. *udara-dāsa*. Shama Shastri translated "born-slave". Chanana proposes to translate it as "*stomach-slave*" (i.e. a person willing to become another's slave for food). The latter seems a more happy interpretation, for the chapter deals mainly with temporary slaves, and the former group were slaves for livelihood. Kangle is of the same opinion (Kangle, II, p. 258).
285. 250, 500 and 1,000 *paṇas*.
286. Restrictions of the possibility of enslaving members of the higher *varṇas* are also mentioned in other *śāstras* (see G.M. Bongard-Levin, G.F. Ilyin, *Drevnyaya Indiya*, pp. 561-562). More recent *Śāstras* advance a thesis on the protection of the interests of the higher *varṇas*, primarily Brāhmaṇas. The *Śāstras* set forth a rule in accordance with which only a member of the same or lower *varṇa* can be made to work off a debt (see Manu, VIII, 177; Nārada, V.39; Yājñavalkya, II.186). Kātyāyana declares that the status of slavedom affects only the three lower *varṇas* but not the Brāhmaṇas. In his opinion, even a member of the Brahmanic *varṇa* is not entitled to make another Brāhmaṇa do slave work. "If a Brāhmaṇa is made a slave," Kātyāyana says, "the king's splendour fades." Thus, unlike the *Arthaśāstra*, later *Śāstras* emphasise the principle of *varṇa* membership (U.N. Ghoshal, *Studies...*, p. 473).
287. See D.R. Chanana, *Slavery in Ancient India.*
288. U.N. Ghoshal, *Studies...*, p. 474; S. Chattopadhyaya, *Social Life in Ancient India*, Calcutta, 1965.
289. According to Medhātithi, the prisoner of war mentioned in the Mānava Dharmaśāstra (VIII.415) is not a Kṣatriya warrior captured in the battle, but a slave, who, after his master is defeated, becomes the property of the victor, i.e. passes to a new owner (see L. Gopal, *The Economic Life...*, p. 71). This is a graphic instance of the striving to limit the possibility of enslavement of free people, primarily the "twice-born".
290. S. Chattopadhyaya, *Social Life...*, pp. 141-143, 149.
291. *Sam.*, II.672-673. In Buddhaghoṣa : *gaṇādīnaṃ, dāsāpi* (*Sam.* III, 1001).
292. *J*, I.484; III.163; IV.167, 276-277; VI.336.
293. *J*, No. 31. In the *Milindapāñho* (IV.11.8) we read about slaves in every village (see also *Arth.* II.35; II.15).
294. See D.R. Chanana, *Slavery in Ancient India.*
295. As is known, monks were forbidden to do manual work.
296. In course of time, the Buddhist community became a big proprietor, on whose land toiled slaves and hired labourers. The Buddha enjoined that fugitive slaves return to their owners, but, judging by isolated data of the sources, monasteries sometimes harboured them and made them work. Interesting data on Buddhist monasteries in Ceylon are given in W. Rahula, *History...*

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297. *Sam.*, III.100, 682-683, 1001, 1237-1239. As far back as the *Vinaya* (II.248), mention is made of a king handing 500 *ārāmikas* to a monastery. They lived near the monastery and worked on its land. There was even a man specially entrusted with the supervision of their work (R.S. Sharma, *Śūdras...*, p. 46).
298. *Sam.* III.683. These data resemble the reports in the *Arthaśāstra* on the handing of provisions to slaves and hired labourers.
299. In the commentary on the *Vinaya*, compiled by the Buddhist monk, Kassapa, special lists of women slaves (*dāsipaṇṇa*) and men slaves (*dāsapaṇṇa*) are mentioned, the manner in which they could be emancipated in different regions (*janapada*) is described, and royal (*rājadāsa*) and monastery (*vihāradāsa*) slaves are enumerated. The commentator notes that one and the same category of them is regarded as belonging to the temple in some countries and to the king, in others : *te hi katthaci dese rājadāsa honti, katthaci vihāradāsā* (see *Vimativinodanī Ṭikā, Ce*, 373).
300. See D.R. Chanana, *Slavery in Ancient India, loc. cit.*
301. *Ibid.*, p. 155.
302. See Y.Y. Tsygankov, 'Drevneindiysky gorod (po dannym "Arthashastry") ['Ancient Indian City (according to the Data of the *Arthaśāstra*')], *Kratkiye soobsheniya instituta narodov Azii* [*Brief Communications of the Institute of the Peoples of Asia*], No. 61, 1963, pp. 36-37.
303. G.M. Bongard-Levin, G.F. Ilyin, *Drevnyaya Indiya*, p. 355.
304. This is recognised, among others, by G.F. Ilyin, Drevnyaya India, p. 353.
305. G.M. Bongard-Levin, G.F. Ilyin, 'Predisloviye...', *loc. cit.*, p. 11; E.M. Medvedev regards this as evidence of the similarity between free and slave labour ("K voprosu...', *loc. cit.*, p. 66).
306. An interesting reference is found in Patañjali's grammar (III.1.26). Both the slaves and the *karmakaras* are here mentioned as having realised that if they work well they will be given rice and clothes and will not be punished by their master. In the *Dīgha-Nikāya* (III.191), the Buddha says that the master should fulfil his obligations towards his slaves and *karmakaras*, providing them with food and pay (*bhattavettanānuppadāneṇa*), taking care of them when they are ill, etc.
307. Slaves and *karmakaras* are mentioned together in the inventory of the belongings of a rich *seṭṭha* (*J.* III.129); they are opposed to a vagabond monk (J. III.300); they are mentioned as labourers hired by a Brāhmaṇa to guard the fields (*J.* IV.277). See also Patañjali for reference to *dāsakarmakara* (B.N. Puri, *India in the Time of Patañjali*, p. 110; also *Theragāthā*, 340; *Aṅg.-N.*III.75). Buddhist sources mention the use of the labour of these categories of workers by members of various *varṇas*— Brāhmaṇas (*J.* IV.15; *Maj. N.* II.186), Kṣatriyas (*J.* V.413) and Vaiśyas *gahapati, seṭṭhi*; *VP*, I, 243; II.154).
308. See also *Arth.* II.25.
309. See R.S. Sharma, *Śūdras...*, p. 181.
310. See L. Gopal, *The Economic Life...*, p. 78.
311. *Arth.* II.15; II.24.
312. G.F. Ilyin, *Drevnyaya Indiya*, pp. 341-342.

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313. See D.R. Chanana, *Slavery in Ancient India.* Sometimes *passā* is interpreted simply as *pesanakārakā.*
314. See also *Saṃ. N.*, I.76.
315. See L. Gopal, *The Economic Life...*, p. 78.
316. See D.R. Chanana, *Slavery in Ancient India.* The *Vinaya-Piṭaka* (III.161) says that slaves and *karmakaras* eat the same food : they received pounded rice with sour skilly.
317. See, for example, A. Basham, *The Wonder that Was India*, London, 1969, p. 153.
318. It is curious that in speaking of the work done by a house bondwoman (*geha-dāsī*) Buddhaghoṣa (*Sam.* II.47) mentions work in the field. In a later text, the *Lekhāpaddhati*, the duties of a bondwoman are listed, which include ploughing, moving grass, manuring the soil, cleaning water reservoirs, milking cows, tending livestock, etc. (See L. Gopal, *The Economic Life...*, pp. 78-79).
319. W. Ruben, *Die Lage der Sklaven...*, pp. 88-89; G.F. Ilyin, 'Osobennosti rabstva v drevney Indii...'. *loc. cit.*
320. *Ibid.*, p. 52.
321. Special importance in housekeeping was attached to fetching water and husking rice. Buddhist texts contain descriptions of their hard work (see D.R. Chanana, *Slavery in Ancient India*). Slaves cooked food (*J.*, VI.177; *Cūllavagga*, IV.4.7; VI.4.1), washed up and cleaned the house. In the *Vinaya-Piṭaka* (III.135), the term *dāsī-bhoga* occurs, which Buddhaghoṣa interpreted as "field work", "house cleaning," "water fetching" (*Sam.*, II.47). Slaves were to serve their masters at meals and at bath (*J.* I.383, I.453).
322. L. Gopal, *The Economic Life...*, p. 78.
323. *J.*, II.429, III.162.
324. G.M. Bongard-Levin, G.F. *Drevnyaya Indiya*, p. 357.
325. One of the *Jātakas* (I.484) tells of a slave women who was hired to husk rice.
326. E.M. Medvedev, 'K voprosu..., *loc. cit.*, p. 65. "The chief trait of ancient Indian slavery was its poor development; slavery in India can be defined as partriarchal in the sense in which it is defined by Marx : intended solely for production providing for self-consumption (G.F. Ilyin, Osobennosti rabstva v drevney Indii, *loc. cit* , pp. 51, 52).
327. *J.*, I.451; II.428; III.167. Interesting data can be cited on a slave appearing as witness at the lawcourt when there were no other reliable 'witnesses available (*Manu*, VIII.70), even though he was not considered legally qualified.
328. G.M. Bongard-Levin, G.F. Ilyin, *Drevnyaya Indiya*, pp. 342-343. The sources often treat slaves as members of their master's family (*J.*, II.428; III.162).
329. See K.K. Zelyin, M.K. Trofimova, *Formy zavisimosti v vostochnom Sredizemnomorye v ellinisticheskv period* [*Forms of Dependence in the East Mediterranean in the Hellenistic Period*], Moscow, 1969, p. 27.
330. *Ind.*, X.9.

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331. Strabo, XV. I.54.
332. Some authors interpreted this report of Megasthenes as a proof of the "mildness" of slavery in ancient India (e.g., *CHI*, I. p. 416).
333. See D.R. Chanana, *Slavery in Ancient India*. Onesicritus, who had visited India before Megasthenes, noted that absence of slaves was peculiar to that part of the country over which Musikanas ruled. This opinion is quoted by Strabo (XV. I.54).
334. See J. Bongert, 'Réflexions ..., *loc. cit* , p. 190.
335. See E.M. Shtaerman, 'Antichnoye obshchestvo. Modernizatsiya istorii i istaricheskiye analogii' ['Antique Society. Modernisation of History and Historical Anologies'],—"*Problemy istorii dokapitalisticheskikh obshchestv*" ["*Problems of the History of Pre-capitalist Society*], Moscow, 1968.
336. For more details, see E.M. Medvedev, 'Karmakara i Bhṛtaka. K probleme formirovaniya nizshikh kast' ['Karmakara and Bhṛtaka. Concerning the Formation of the Lower Castes'],—*Kasty v Indii* [*Castes in India*], pp. 133-149; *Istoriya Indii v sredniye veka* [*History of India in the Middle Ages*], pp. 45-51; M. Schetelich, "*Karmakara*" *im Arthaśāstra des Kauṭilya* (See W. Ruben, *Entwicklung...*, Bd I, pp. 234-235).
337. *karmakara*, lit. "doing work". Sometimes the term *bhṛtaka* is used (Pāli, *bhaṭaka*), "earning an allowance". Evidently, Pāṇini held the two terms to be synonymous, as he denotes the pay given to *karmakaras* as *bhṛti* (V.S. Agrawala, *India as Known to Pāṇini*, p. 236). In Nārada (V.3), *bhṛtakas* form a category of *karmakaras*. In the *Vinaya-Piṭaka* (VI.224), *karmakara* is explained as *bhaṭaka* and *āhataka*, or "bhaṭaka who is āhaṭaka" (*kammakaro nāma bhaṭakoāhaṭako*). Scholars are not unanimous in interpreting the term *āhaṭako*. D.R. Chanana holds it to be the designation of a man given in pledge (he compares it with Skr. *āhiṭaka* from the stem *dhā*, and objects to its correlation with the verb *han*, to beat," "to beat up"). R.S. Sharma links it with the word *āhṛta* ("taken," "brought," "captured"); in his view, its comparison with *āhiṭaka* is incorrect from the standpoint of grammar ("pawned"). He believes that the position of the *bhṛtakas* was better than that of the *karmakaras*. (R.S. Sharma, *Śūdras...*, pp. 97-98).
338. G.M. Bongard-Levin, G.F. Ilyin, *Drevnyaya Indiya*, p. 372.
339. E.M. Medvedev, 'Karmakara..., *loc. cit.*, p. 134.
340. R.S. Sharma, *Śūdras...*, p. 147.
341. For more details, see K.M. Saran, *Labour in Ancient India*, Bombay, 1957, p. 39.
342. Cited from R.S. Sharma, *Śūdras...*, p. 232. Kīnaśa was sometimes interpreted as "pulling the plough"—*halavāhaka* (see D.C Sircar, ed., *Land System...*, p. 91).
343. *VP.*, I. 240.
344. Cf. *śūdra-karṣakas*, "śūdras tilling land" (*Arth.* II.1); *purisa*, lit. "man", but usually taken in the sense "servant", "dependent man". The text obviously refers to land labourers who had been hired for the sowing season. The combination of *kassaka* with *purisa* underlines the dependent status of the former. One of the *Jātakas* (VI. 426) states that *purisa* must

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always work for the man in whose house he lives.

345. One of the *Jātakas* (IV.277) mentions *karmakaras* guarding the fields of a Brāhmaṇa. A farming estate where *karmakaras* worked along with a slaves is mentioned in the *Suttanīpāta* and in Buddhaghoṣa's commentary (*Sam.* I- 171); see *Social and Rural Economy...*, vol. II, pp. 424-425.
346. *J.*, II, 196.
347. *Ibid*, IV. 43.
348. *Pap.* III. 8.
349. In the Sanskrit inscriptions of Ceylon, the labourers hired at monastery farms were called *kammakaras*.
350. *Arth.*, II 23.
351. *J.*, IV. 38.
352. *Ibid*, IV. 15; I. 239.
353. *Ibid.*, III. 129.
354. E.M. Medvedev, 'Karmakara..., *loc. cit.*, p. 134.
355. Cf. *Mānava Dharmaśāstra* VIII, 216-217.
356. Cf. *Bṛhaspati*, XVI. 9.
357. See *Nārada*, V.4; *jātikarmakṛtaścokto viśeṣo vṛttireva ca*; *Bṛhaspati*, XVI. 3; *jātikarmānurūpataḥ*.
"The karmakaras, a segment of a low social order, served as the basis in the formation of the oppressed untouchables and other low castes of the Middle Ages" *Istoriya Indii v sredniye veka* [*History of India in the Middle Ages*], p. 49).
358. *Maj. N*, 1. 344.
359. *J.*, III. 406.
360. G.M. Bongard-Levin G.F. Ilyin, *Drevnyaya Indiya*, p. 372.
361. Cf. K.K. Zelyin, M.K. Trofimova, *Formy zavisimosti...*, p. 49.
362. This is the opinion of G.F. Ilyin (*Drevnyaya Indiya*, p. 268).
363. According to A.M. Osipov, "the village community remained the basis of the economic structure of India" (A.M. Osipov, *Kratky ocherk...*, p. 54). See also Y.I. Semyonov, 'Kategoriya "obshchestvenno-ekonomichesky uklod" i eygo znacheniye dlya filosofskoi i istoricheskoi nauk [The Category of "Socio-Economic Structure" and its Significance for Philosophical and Historical Sciences'], *Filosofskiye nauki* [*Philosophical Sciences*], No. 3, 1964, p. 27.
364. V.N. Nikiforov admits that "the principal producers in ancient society were agricultural community members", and proposes to introduce the term "communal slave-owning system" for convenience sake. He adds that this does not mean that a new formation is introduced or some formation is abolished, but is just an attempt at desisting "from the vulgar interpretation of the slave-owning society quite current until recently" (*Obshcheye i osobennoye...*, p. 32).
According to L.S. Perelomov, in ancient China, in the 4th century B.C.—1st century A.D., "the producers of material wealth in the principal branch of labour-agriculture were the free community members, free tenants and hired labourers" (*ibid.*, p. 158).

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365. It is hard to agree with Y.I. Semyonov, who argues that in ancient Orient the communal structure (petty autonomous natural economy) was part of the feudal socio-economic structure and that the petty independent producers were under a feudal dependence (Y.I. Semyonov, 'Problema...', *loc. cit.*, p. 84).
366. K. Marx, *Capital*, vol. I, Progress Publishers, Moscow, p. 79.
367. See K. Marx, F. Engels, *Werke*, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1962, B. 21, S. 338. "Im asiatischen und klassischen Altertum war die herrschende Form der Klassenunterdrückung die Sklaverei" (In the Asiatic and classical antiquity, the predominant form of class oppression was slavery).
368. See A.Y. Gurevich, *Problemy genezisa feodalisma v Zapadnoi Yevrope* [*Problems of the Genesis of Feudalism in Western Europe*], Moscow, 1970, pp. 13, 14, 18.
369. See K. Marx, *Capital*, vol. III, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1966, p. 315.
370. *Ibid.*, p. 792.
371. See V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, vol. 9, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1965, p. 445.
372. See K. Marx, F. Engels, *Werke*, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1965, B. 26, S. 383: "erhalten auch die Verhältnisse einen feudalen Ausdruck, die dem Wesen des Feudalismus fernstehen."
373. See E.M. Medvedev, 'K voprosu...', *loc. cit.*, pp. 65-77.
374. See A.M. Osipov, *Kratky ocherk...*, pp. 53, 54, 67; *Istoriya Indii v sreddiye veka* [*History of India in the Middle Ages*], p. 37. In his article 'Feodalniye otnosheniya v drevney i srednevekovoi Indii' ['Feudal Relations in Ancient and Mediaeval India'], *Narody Azii i Afriki* [*Peoples of Asia and Africa*], No. 3, 1970. pp. 86-87, E.M. Medvedev defines early Indian society as pre-feudal, drawing attention to "the presence of feudal relations in ancient India". This view is similar to that of Y.I. Semyonov ('Problema...', *loc. cit.*, p. 85).
375. Pran Nath, *A Study of the Economic Conditions of Ancient India*, London, 1929.
376. For more details, see L. Gopal, 'On Feudal Polity...', *loc. cit.*, pp. 405-413; by the same author, 'On Some Problems of Feudalism in Ancient India', *ABORI*, vol. 44, 1963, pp. 1-32.
377. *Vsemirnaya Istoriya* [*World History*], vol. II, Moscow, 1956. This idea is also advanced in *Istoriya Indii v sredniye veka* [*History of India in the Middle Ages*], pp. 8, 11, 52. Of the recent studies by Indian scholars, noteworthy are : R.S. Sharma, *Indian Feudalism...*; S.A. Husaini, *The Economic History...*
378. E.M. Medvedev, 'Feodalniye otnosheniya...', *loc. cit.*, p. 86.
379. E.M. Medvedev, 'K voprosu...', *loc. cit.*, p. 69.
380. K.Z. Ashrafyan, 'Problemy razvitiya feodalizma...', *loc. cit.*, p. 71.
381. G.M. Bongard-Levin, G.F. Ilyin, *Drevnyaya Indiya*, ch. 26.
382. E.M. Medvedev, 'K voprosu...', *loc. cit.*, p. 69. See also Y.I. Semyonov, 'Problema...', *loc. cit.*, p. 84.
383. "The feudal structure is epitomised in the predominant form of exploitation-that practised by the State by means of collecting rent-tax from

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the land tillers" (E.M. Medvedev, 'Feodalniye otnosheniya...', *loc. cit.*, p. 85). See also Y. Kostin, 'O drevneaziatskom obshchestve' ['On Ancient Asian Society'], *Narody Azii i Afriki* [*Peoples of Asia and Africa*], No. 3, 1966, p. 228.

384. Karl Marx specially emphasised in the *Capital* that tax and rent coincide if the state is the proprietor of land (K. Marx, *Capital*, vol. III, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1966, p. 315).
385. K.Z. Ashrafyan, 'Problemy razvitiya feodalizma...', *loc. cit.*, p. 75. In this paper, the author departs from her earlier viewpoint, according to which the form of realisation of the state feudal property was the rent-tax, since, in her opinion, such an interpretation reflected solely the official feudal doctrine in accordance with which the state was regarded as the owner of all lands in some Oriental countries. Analysing the data pertinent to ancient societies in the Middle East, I.M. Dyakonov arrives at the conclusion that, since the king did not act as the proprietor of all land, the tax he received was not rent ('Problemy sobstvennosti...', *loc. cit.*, p. 22-23).
386. See E.M. Medvedev, 'Renta, nalog, sobstvennost. Nekotoriye problemy indiyskogo feodalizma' ['Rent, tax, property. Some Problems of Indian Feudalism'], *Problemy istorii Indii i stran Srednego Vostoka* [*Problems of the History of India and the Countries of the Middle East*], Moscow, 1972, p. 16.
387. E.M. Medvedev, 'K voprosu...', *loc. cit.*, p. 71.
388. *Istoriya Indii v sredniye veka* [*History of India in the Middle Ages*], p. 34.
389. *Ibid.*, p. 35. This viewpoint is expounded at length in relation to the countries of ancient Orient in the paper by Y.I. Semyonov ('Problema...', *loc. cit.*, pp. 69-89).
390. E.M. Medvedev, 'Feodalniye otnosheniya...', *loc. cit.*, p. 86.
391. See G.F. Ilyin, *Drevnyaya Indiya*, p. 369, note 36.
392. *Ibid.*, p. 369. "The State can act as the exploiter of the land tiller only when it is the owner of the land; in this case the tax coincides with the rent. If, however, the state is not the proprietor of the cultivated land (and all the available data suggest that this was precisely the case), then the levying of land tax by the state cannot be regarded as exploitation, since exploitation is defined as appropriation of another's labour by the proprietor of the means of production" (G.F. Ilyin, 'Osnovniye problemy sotsialnoi istorii drevney Indii' ['Basic Problems of the Social History of Ancient India'], Moscow, 1970, pp. 10-11).
393. See *Obshcheye i osobennoye...*, p. 157.
394. E.M. Medvedev, 'K voprosu...', *loc. cit.*, p. 71.
395. E.M. Medvedev, 'Feodalniye otnosheniya...', *loc. cit.*, p. 85.
396. See G.M. Bongard-Levin, G.F. Ilyin, *Drevnyaya Indiya*, pp. 318-321.
397. Like the community members who paid taxes to the state, the hired labourers and free tenants cannot be included in the category of feudally dependent peasants.
398. *Istoriya Indii v sredniye veka*, p. 37.
399. See L. Gopal, 'Ownership...', *loc. cit.*, p. 253.

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400. See G.M. Bongard-Levin, C.F. Ilyin, *Drevnyaya Indiya*, p. 568; R. Choudhary, 'Some Historical Aspects of Feudalism in Ancient India', *JIH*, vol. 37, pt 2, 1959, p. 387.
401. See N.N. Kher, Agrarian and Fiscal Economy in the Mauryan and Post-Mauryan Age, Delhi, 1973, comp. 66.
402. The sources sometimes emphasise that only several categories of Brāhmaṇas (in particular, *Śrotriyas*) were exempt from taxes. See D.N. Jha, *Revenue System...*, pp. 126-127. U.N. Ghoshal, *Contribution...*, pp. 136-141.
403. N.N. Kher, Agrarian..., *loc. cit.*, p. 77.
404. *Ibid.*, p. 79.
405. R.S. Sharma *Aspects...*, p. 137; D.N. Jha, *Revenue System...*, p. 127.
406. L. Gopal, 'Ownership...', *loc. cit.*, p. 256.
407. Prior to the beginning of the Gupta period, epigraphs contain no data relating to the bestowal of land with tax immunity (D.N. Jha, *Revenue System...*, p. 128).
408. R.S. Sharma, *Feudalism...*, p. 4. Judging by Buddhaghoṣa's commentary, in the 5th century *brahmadeya* implied investiture with certain judicial and administrative rights (S.A. Husaini, *The Economic History...*, p. 166; U.N. Ghoshal, *Contribution...* .).
409. For more details, see E.M. Medvedev, 'Evolyutsiya formy indiyskikh darstvennykh gramot' [Evolution of the Form of Indian Bestowal Settlements], *loc. cit.*
410. According to the commentator Kullūka Bhaṭṭa, a *kula* was the size of a land plot that could be ploughed by two teams of oxen. In the commentary *Nītirṇiti* on the *Arthaśāstra*, a *kula* in interpreted as a plot that can be ploughed by one, two or three ploughs. According to the commentary, the smallest village had 100 such plots (fields), and the biggest one, 500 (Kangle, II, p. 55).
411. L. Gopal, 'On Feudal Polity...,' *loc. cit.*, p. 407.
412. G.M. Bongard-Levin, G.F. Ilyin, *Drevnyaya Indiya*, p. 569. E.M. Medvedev supposes that simultaneously the right to the exploitation of the holders of the land plots was conveyed ('K voprosu..., *loc. cit.*, p. 72), but this is not confirmed by the evidence pertaining to the period under discussion.
413. 'O zapisyakh Karla Marksa, sdelannykh im pri izuchenii knigi M. Kovalevskogo "Obshshinnoye zemlevladeniye, prichiny, khod i posledstviya yego razlozheniya" ['On Notes made by Karl Marx in Studying the Book by M. Kovalevsky "Communal Land Tenure, Causes, Course ane Consequences of its Decay"], *Sovetskoye vostokovedeniye* ["*Soviet Oriental Studies*], No. 2, 1958.
414. N.N. Lher, Agroriau loc. cit., p. 75.
415. E.M. Medvedev, 'K voprosu...', *loc. cit.*, p. 71; G.F. Ilyin, in *Drevnyaya Indiya*, pp. 569-570.
416. See L.Gopal, 'On Feudal Polity...', *loc. cit.*
417. Kangle, III, p. 172.
418. Kangle leans upon the evidence of the commentary on the *Jayamaṅgalā*

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in which *abhirūpadāyādakāni* is explained as follows: "of which sons, grandsons, etc. endowed with learning and character are to be owners and which are not to revert to the king" (Kangle, II, p. 56).

419. Service grants were known in a very early period, long before the Mauryan age.
420. G.M. Bongard-Levin, G.F. Ilyin, *Drevnyaya Indiya*, p. 568.
421. E.M. Medvedev, 'K voprosu..., *loc. cit.*, p. 74. In K.A. Antonova's opinion, feudalism began to develop in India in the 5th-7th cent. (K.A. Antonova, 'K voprosu o razvitii feodalizma v Indii ['Concerning the Development of Feudalism in India'], "*Kratkiye soobshcheniya instituta narodov Azii*" ["*Brief Communications of the Institute of the Peoples of Asia*], No. 3, 1952, p. 31.
422. E.M. Medvedev, 'K voprosu...', *loc. cit.*, p. 77.
423. *Ibid.*
424. See Y. Kostin, *O drevneaziatskom obshchestve* [*On Ancient Asian Society*], p. 229.
425. For more details, see A.Y. Gurevich, *Problemy genezisa...*, pp. 10-11.
426. Cf. E.M. Medvedev, 'Feodalniye otnosheniya...', *loc. cit.*, p. 87.
427. Tenancy relations in ancient India (including the Mauryan age) were fairly well developed, but they became particularly so in the first centuries A.D. This question deserves special investigation.
428. See G.M. Bongard-Levin, G.F. Ilyin, *Drevnyaya Indiya*, p. 519.
429. Cf. M.V. Kryukov, *Sotsialnaya differentsiatsiya v drevnem Kitaye* (*opyt sravnitelno-istoricheskoi kharakteristiki*) [*Social Differentiation in Ancient China* (*Essay of Comparative-Historical Characterisation*)],—"Razlozheniye rodovogo stroya i formirovaniye klassovogo obshchestva" ["The Decay of the Tribal System and the Formation of a Class Society"], ed. by A.I. Pershitz, Moscow, 1968, p. 249.
430. V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, vol. I, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1963, p. 410.
431. *Ibid.*
432. S.L. Utchenko, E.M. Shtaerman, 'O nekotorykh voprosakh istorii rabstve' ['On Some problems of the History of Slavery'], Vestnik drevney istorii [*Bulletin of Ancient History*], No. 4, 1960, p. 21.
433. As mentioned by R.S. Sharma the literature on the caste organisation contains some 5,000 titles (R.S. Sharma, 'Historiography of the Indian Social Order', in *Historians of India...*).
434. See, for example, J. Muir, 'Relation of the Priests to the Other Classes of Indian Society in the Vedic Age, *JRAS*, vol. 2, 1886, pp. 257-302; A. Weber, 'Collectanca über die Kastenverhältnisse in den Brāhmaṇa and Sūtra', *Indische Studien*, 10, pp. 1-160; E.W. Hopkins, 'Position of Ruling Caste...', *loc. cit.*; by the same author, *The Mutual Relations of the Four Castes According to the Mānavadharmaśāstram*, Liepzig, 1887. This question is dealt with in the relevant chapters of the studies devoted to the analysis of the sources (see R.C. Hazra, *Studies on the Purāṇic Records on Hindu Rites and Customs*, Dacca, 1940; V.S. Agrawala, *India as Known to Pāṇini*; P.V. Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra*, vol. 2 pt 1: D.R. Patil, *Cultural*

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History from the Vāyu Purāṇa, Poona, 1946; V.M. Apte, *Social and Religious Life in the Gṛhyasūtras*, Bombay, 1954; Chitra Tiwari, *Śūdras in Manu*, Delhi, 1953).

435. See, for example, S.V. Ketkar, *The History of Caste in India*, New York, 1909; N.K. Dutt, *Origin and Growth of Caste in India*, vol. I (B.C. 2000-3000), London, 1931; A.M. Hocart, *Les Castes* Paris, 1938; G.K. Pillai, *Origin and Development of Caste*, Allahabad, 1959. These problems are also touched upon in general works on the socio-economic and political history of ancient India : R.S. Sharma, *Śūdras...*; A. Bose, *Social and Rural Economy...*; R.S. Majumdar, *Corporate Life...*; H.C. Chakladar, *Social Life in Ancient India*, Calcutta, 1929.
436. Regrettably, the problem of the class-and-caste organisation in the ancient Indian non-monarchical formations (republics) has not been specially investigated by scholars. Even Y. Mishra's work devoted to the history of the Licchavis gives but fragmentary data (see Y. Mishra, *An Early History of Vaiśālī*, Delhi, 1962, pp. 250-351). The same drawback is found in J.P. Sharma's work (J.P. Sharma, *Republics in Ancient India*, Leiden, 1968).
437. See G.M. Bongard-Levin, 'O soslovnoy organizatsii v ganakh i sangkhakh drevney Indii' ['On the Caste Organisation in Gaṇas and Saṅghas in Ancient India'], *Mezhdunarodniy congress antropologov i etnografov* [*International Congress of Anthropologists and Ethnographers*], Moscow, 1964; by the same author, 'Nekotoriye cherty soslovnoi organizatsii v ganakh i sangkhakh drevney Indii' ['Some Features of Caste Organisation in Gaṇas and Saṅghas of Ancient India'], in *Kasty v Indii* [*Castes in India*], ed. by G.G. Kotovsky, Moscow, 1965, pp. 109-132; W. Ruben, 'Some Problems of the Ancient Indian Republics, *Kunwar Muhammad Ashraf*, An Indian Scholar and Revolutionary 1903-1962, Berlin, 1966, pp. 5-29.
438. *Maj. N.*, II.148-149; see also Buddhaghoṣa's commentary (*Pap.* III.409).
439. *taredapadamātmanaḥ dhanena vaiśyaśūdrau.* See R.S. Sharma, *Śūdras...*, p. 103.
440. See D.D. Kosambi, 'Ancient Kosala and Magadha', *JBBRAS*, vol. 27, p. 184.
441. Late-Vedic literature contains numerous references to the divine origin of Brāhmaṇas, who were even treated as earthly gods (P.V. Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra*, vol. II, pt I, pp. 37-38); J. Muir, 'Relation...', *loc. cit.*, pp. 257-302; E.W. Hopkins, 'Position of the Ruling Caste...', *loc cit.*).
442. P.L. Barua, 'The Doctrine of Caste in Early Buddhism', *JAS of Pakistan*, vol. 4, 1959, pp. 134-156.
443. *Maj. N.*, II.128-129.
444. In the *Jātakas* (I.49), the Buddha speaks about the *varṇas* of Kṣatriyas and Brāhmaṇas as the highest ones (see F. Fick, *Die Sociale Gliederung...*, pp. 55-56).
445. Y. Krishnan, 'Was There Any Conflict between the Brahmanas and the Buddhists', *IHQ*, vol. 30, No. 2, 1954, pp. 167-173.
446. N. Wagle, *Society at the Time of the Buddha.*

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447. B. Timmer held that Megasthenes' data on the division into seven "groups" were based solely on the ambassador's personal observations (B. Timmer, *Megasthenes...*, pp. 66-69). R. Thapar notes that she had collected some special data on the Indian caste organisation (R. Thapar, *Aśoka...*, p. 61). In her opinion, Megasthenes' seven "groups" could also be related to Herodotus' seven "classes" in Egypt (Herodotus, II.164).
448. Strabo, XV.1.39.
449. *J.*, III.28.417.
450. N. Wagle, *Society at the Time of the Buddha*, p. 72.
451. "Grants" of villages to Brāhmaṇas (*brahmadeyya*) are reported in the Buddhist sources. Bimbisāra granted the village of Khānumata in Magadha to the Brāhmaṇa Kuṭadanta (*Dīg. N.*, I.127). King Pasenadi's "gift" is mentioned in *Maj. N.*, (II.164). For further data, see the section on land ownership.
452. B. Ch. Law, *India...*, as Described in Early Texts of Buddhism and Jainism, 1941, pp. 160-164.
453. *J.*, IV.301.
454. R. Fick, *Die sociale Gliederung...*, p. 124.
455. *Dīg. N.*, I.104-105.
456. *J.*, II.186-187; V.1.127; B. Ch. Law, *India as Described...*, p. 155.
457. For more detail; seer B. Ch. Law, *India as Described...*; J. Ch. Jain, *Life...*; R.N. Mehta, *Pre-Buddhist India*, Bombay, 1939.
458. *Loke' mīṣāṃ Brāhmaṇaṃ pūrvam ānayeti vaḥ sarva pūrvaḥ sa ānīyate* (IV.2.36. see B.N. Puri, *India in the Time of Patañjali*, p. 83).
459. *varṇānāṃ cānupūrvyeṇa pūrvanipāto bhavatīti vaktavyaṃ brāhmaṇakṣatriya-vaṭśūdraḥ.*
460. See *CHI*, I, p. 237.
461. *J.*, II.165; III.15-21, 162-163, 401; IV.34; V.22.
462. B.Ch. Law, *India as Described...*, p. 151.
463. N. Wagle, *Society at the Time of the Buddha*, p. 151.
464. B.N. Puri, *India in the Time of Patañjali*, p. 83.
465. *vo hīno jātibrāhmaṇa eva saḥ* (*ibid.*).
466. *na kho brāhmaṇa sandissanti, etarhi brāhmaṇa porāṇānaṃ brāhmaṇaṃ dhammeti.*
467. Cf. Megasthenes' evidence that Brāhmaṇas were exempt from taxes and duties (Strabo, XV.1.39).
468. B.Ch. Law, *India as Described...*, p. 162.
469. *J.*, I.439.
470. N. Wagle, *Society at the Time of the Buddha*, p. 18.
471. G.M. Bongard-Levin, G.F. Ilyin, *Drevnyaya Indiya* [*Ancient India*], p. 386.
472. *Dig. N.*, I.98.
473. *Maj. N.*, 1.358; *Saṃ. N.*, I.153; II.284.
474. B. Ch. Law, *Indological Studies*, p. 76; R.S. Sharma, *Aspects...*, p. 161.
475. Pāṇini (V.2.71) mentions the country (*janapada*) of Brāhmaṇaka; in

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Kāśikā it is interpreted as a "country of martial Brahmans" (*yatrāyudhajivino Brahmaṇaḥ santi*). It may be related to the brahmanoi of the Greek authors (Plutarch, LIX), See V.S. Agrawala, *India as Known to Pāṇini*, p. 50; P.V. Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra*, vol. II, pt 1, p. 122. Kauṭilya's attitude (IX.2) is of interest; he objected to recruiting Brāhmaṇas into the army. Āpastamba (I.10.29.7) objects to the enrolment of Brāhmaṇas for military service and even advises that they should not be allowed to possess arms (P.V. Kane, *History of Dharmaśastra*, vol. 2, pt I, p. 122).

476. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, transl. by A.L. Syrkin, Moscow, 1964, p. 35.
477. The *Jātakas* mention Kṣatriyas engaged in trade (IV.84) and in the manufacture of crockery (V.290-293).
478. See N. Wagle, *Society at the Time of the Buddha*, p. 133.
479. B.Ch. Law, *India as Described*, p. 140.
480. *VP.*, I.240.
481. D.R. Chanana, *Slavery in Ancient India*, p. 73. *Theragāthā* (LXX) recounts the story of the daughter of a goldsmith (*suvaṇṇakāra*), who becomes a nun and leaves her slaves, *karmakaras* and the land in her village (*natigaṇaṃ dāsakammakārāni ca gāmakhettāni*).
482. *J.*, III.21; III.325.
483. R.S. Sharma, *Śūdras...*, p. 160.
484. R.S. Sharma, *Aspects of Political Ideas...*, p. 165.
485. G.M. Bongard-Levin, G.F. Ilyin, *Drevnyaya Indiya* [*Ancient India*], p. 369.
486. Gautama (X. 42) : *nirviṣtam vaiśyaśūdrayoḥ*; see also *Arth. I.* 3 : "The special duties of the Vaiśya are studying, performing sacrifices for self, making gifts, agriculture, cattle-rearing and trade. Those of the Śūdra are : service of the twice-born, housekeeping, engaging in an economic calling (viz, agriculture, cattle-rearing and trade) and the profession of the artisan and the actor" (Kangle's translation).
487. R.S. Sharma, *Śūdras...*, p. 103.
488. *Vaśiṣṭha*, VI. 24.
489. *Yugapurāṇa*, 100-101 (p. 33).
490. See D. Chattopadhyaya, *Lokāyata*. A Study in Ancient Indian Materialism.
491. This reservation is accounted for by the fact that, judging by Pāṇini and his commentators, some of the *saṅghas* were headed by Brāhmaṇas, though we do not possess detailed data on these (see V.S. Agrawala, *India as Known to Pāṇini*, p. 77).
492. For more details, see B. Ch. Law, *Some Kṣatriya Tribes in Ancient India*, Calcutta, 1924.
493. *Dīg. N.*, XVI.
494. This seems to be indicated by the report in the *Mahāvastu* (III. 179) on 500 Kṣatriyas of the Śākyas joining a Buddhist community. Depending on their standing (wealth) – *svakasvakehi vibhavehi*—some left their homes on elephants, others in chariots, and still others on horseback.
495. V.S. Agrawala, *India as Known to Pāṇini*, pp. 428-429; Kāśikā, *A Commentary on Pāṇini's Grammatical Aphorisms* vol. II, Benares, 1876. p. 217.

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496. According to Kāśikā (commentary on Pāṇini, VI. 2.34), the term *rājanya* denotes members of the Ksatriya families who had gone through the consecration rite (*rājanyagrahaṇam ihābhiṣikta vaṃśyānāṃ kṣatriyānāṃ grahaṇārthaṃ*). Along with these, there existed non-consecrated families (*ete ca nābhiṣiktavaṃśyā*). It may be supposed that young Kṣatriyas, who bore that title *kumāra* (see *Arth.* XI and the *Vessantara-Jātaka* on the arrival of Buddha to Kapilavastu, where he was met by Kṣatriya men and women of the *Śākya-rāja-kumāre ca rāja-kumāriyo ca*), on reaching a certain age and position went through the consecration ceremony and became *rajās*, rightful members of this privileged group of free population. This supposition is corroborated by Buddhaghoṣa's commentary (*Sum.* I. 2).
497. *J.*, IV. 149.
498. The text tells how 50 infuriated *rājas* of the Licchavis pursued a *senāpati* of the kingdom of Kośala, who had profaned a sacred reservoir by bathing his wife in it.
499. *Lalitavistara*, ed. by S. Lefmann, vol. I. Halle, 1902-1908, p. 26.
500. *Mbh.*, XII. 107. 23-25 : *mantraguptiḥ pradhāneṣu... na gaṇaḥ kṛtsnaśo mantraṃ śrotumarhanti* (see K.P. Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*, ch. XIV.
501. *Malla-pāmokkhā ti majjhīma-vayā ṭhāma sampaṇṇā... Mallarajano* (*Sum.*, II. 596).
502. K.P. Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*, pp, 31, 32, 51; R. Ch. Majumdar, *Corporate Life...*, pp. 223, 250; U.N. Ghoshal, *Studies...*, pp. 360-363.
503. See *Arthaśāstra*, XI. 1.20 (Kangle, I, p. 244).
504, See W. Ruben, 'Some Problems...', *loc. cit.*
505. See G.M. Bongard-Levin, 'Nekotoriye osobennosti...', *loc. cit.*, pp. 46-50, 64-67.
506. *āuydhajivisamghañ ñyadvāhikeṣvabrāhmaṇarājanyāt*, V. 3, 115.
507. V.S. Agrawala *India as Known to Pāṇini*, pp. 75-76.
508. See Kāśikā's commentary (V. 3.114): *vāhīkeṣu ya āuydhajivisaṃghastadvācinaḥ prātipādakād brāhmaṇarājanyavarjiāt svārthe ñyaṭ pratyayo hhavati| brāhmaṇe tadviśeṣagrahaṇaṃ|| 'rājanye tu svarūpagrahaṇameva* (*Kaśika, A Commentary...*, II, p. 66).
509. *Uvāsagadasāo*, vol. II, pp. 5-6, 52-54.
510. Cf. Y. Mishra, *An Early History of Vaiśalī.*
511. It is noteworthy that in these works, put into the Brāhmaṇa Ambhaṭṭha's mouth and obviously intended to convey the Brāhmaṇic viewpoint, the listing of the *varṇas* begins with *Kśatriyas* : *khattiya brahmaṇa vessa sudda*, although the speaker wishes to affirm the superiority of the Brāhmaṇas. In Buddhist texts Kṣatriyas usually precede Brāhmaṇas when the standing of Buddhists is dealt with, and Brāhmaṇas precede Kṣatriyas when the former expound their views. In such cases, the order was probably determined by the actual position of Kṣatriyas in that period.
512. *vaṇṇa khattiya ca vessa sudda aññadatthu brāhmaṇass'eva paricaraka saṃpajjanti* (*Dīg., N.*, III. 1.15).
513. *Sum.*, I. 2 (commentary on *Dīg. N.*. III. 1.13),
514. See D. Chattopadhyaya, *Lokāyata.*

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515. Cf. the report in Kauṭilya (section XI) on the informers who were to stay in the *saṅghas.*
516. These data from the epics are cited in D. Chattopadhyaya's *Lokāyata.*
517. *Ibid.*
518. See G.M. Bongard-Levin, 'Nekotoriye osobennosti...,' *loc. cit*,, pp. 46-50,
519. R.S. Sharma, *Aspects*..., p. 175.
520. *Mahāvastu*, III. 112-113.
521. *Vinayavastu*, vol. II, pt I, pp. 13-14: vol. III, pp. 224, 225, 228, 233.
522. Śuddhodana addressed Mahānāma in the presence of 500 Kṣatriyas. It may be supposed that here not an ordinary person is meant but a Kṣatriya. According to the text, his prime duty was to salute daily the head (*rāja*) of the Śākyas and the elders of the Śākyas (*Śakyamahāttaraka*).
523. *Mahāvastu*, III. 177.
524. One of the *Jātakas* (II. 4) tells of a barber's son from Vaiśālī, who fell in in love with a maiden from a Kṣatriya family whom he could not marry because he had to take for a wife a girl of the same standing and descent as himself.
525. *Civaravastu*, III, pt III, p. 6.
526. Cf. Megasthenes' evidence on the division of the Indian society into groups (genos) and on the marital law : "The custom of the country prohibits intermarriage between the castes : for instance, the husbandman cannot take a wife from the artisan caste or conversely (*Ind.*, XII. 8).
527. *khaṇḍayapradhunapuruṣe iti kṛtva prathame skandhe gṛhaṃ dattaṃ.*
528. See G.M. Bongard-Levin, 'O soslovnoi organizatsii...', *loc. cit.*, by the same author, 'Nekotoriye cherty soslovnoi organizatsii...', *loc. cit.*

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CHAPTER IV

THE ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM OF THE MAURYAN EMPIRE

1. The Frontiers of the Empire

THE MAURYAN empire was one of the largest states not only in ancient India but perhaps in the whole of the ancient Orient. Within its framework it united a great number of peoples and tribes which differed from one another in ethnological and linguistic respects, which were at different cultural levels, subscribed to different creeds, and followed different customs and traditions.

Judging by the Aśokan inscriptions, Kauṭilya's treatise and the early Buddhist texts, the idea had already been formed by that time of a state covering large territory and headed by a "ruler of the land", whose power would extend over the region "from the Southern Ocean to the summits of the Himālayas."[1] Political schools were outlining a doctrine for defining the frontiers of the state and the relations of the state with near and distant neighbours.[2] The science of state polity included questions of diplomatic relations and many aspects of foreign policy.[3]

The Aśokan inscriptions refer to the appointment of *dharma-mahāmātras* to spread the *Dharma* "across the whole land" (*savapuṭhaviyam*)[4] and mention the empire, which is called *Jambu-dvīpa*.[5] In Buddhist literature Aśoka is called "the ruler of Jambudvīpa". In the Mauryan epoch, there developed the idea of a king bearing the title *cakravartin*, the ruler "turning the wheel of his power". The *Arthaśāstra* mentions (IX.1) that the land extending over thousands of *yojanas* from the east to the west and stretching northwards from the sea to the Himālayas was the *cakravartin's kṣetra*.[6] The edicts mention peoples living far beyond the borders of the empire and tell of the spread of the *Dharma* to the countries ruled by the kings of Egypt: Cyrene,

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Epirus and Macedonia.

In that early period, the sources already distinguished Bimbisāra of Magadha and the king of Kośala Pasenadi from Emperor Aśoka. Buddhaghoṣa distinguishes these "kings of pradeṣa" (*padesarāja*) from the "sovereign of Jaṃbudvīpa" (*dīpacakkavatī*).[7]

The range of geographical names occurring in the inscriptions is extremely wide,[8] which may indicate that the Mauryan empire maintained relations with many states.

In determining the frontiers of the empire, scholars mostly use epigraphic data and also evidence preserved in the works of ancient writers. The reports of Chinese travellers are of value when they are corroborated by epigraphy or archaeological data.

The debate concerning the western frontier of the empire is still on, although some of the territories are mentioned in connection with this frontier in the Vth and XIIIth Major Rock Edicts. In the Vth Edict, for example, on the occasion of the appointment of a new group of officials, *dharmamahāmātras*, the emperor says: "they are appointed . . . to propagate [the principles of] the Dharma among the Yonas, Kambojas, Gandhāras, Riṣṭikas Pitiṇikas and other peoples belonging to the aparāṭā" (*Yona Kamboja Gandhārāṇam Risṭika Peteṇikānam ye vāpi amñe aparātā*).[9]

In this case the term *aparāṭā* (*aparāntāḥ*) is to be understood to mean the peoples of the western regions.[10] It is not only the inclusion of the Yonas and the Kambojas in the *aparātā* group that appears to favour this interpretation, but also the fact that many sources use the term *aparānta* to denote Western India or some of its parts.[11]

The fact that the above peoples were incorporated in Aśoka's empire is confirmed by the data of other edicts and by the Kandahar bilingual record.[12] According to the Kandahar record, the *aparātā* peoples also included the Gandhāras, who inhabited the region usually referred to as Uttarāpatha[13] (Northern India). This suggests that in Aśoka's time the term *aparātā* had acquired a broader meaning, namely "regions west of Madhyadeśa".[14]

The discovery of the Graeco-Aramaic bilingual in Kandahar—the Greek version of which is linked by researchers with the Yonas, and the Aramaic version (incorporating Iranian words) with the Kambojas, of Aśoka's other inscriptions—makes it possible to locate the Yonas and the Kambojas in Arachosia and

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confirms the correctness of the definition of the Yonas and Kambojas of the Aśokan Edict as "living in the West" (*aparātā*).

The connection between the Yonas and the western areas is also borne out by Ceylonese chronicles, which refer to the dispatch of missions by Aśoka after the Buddhist Council in Pāṭaliputra.[15] One of the missions, headed by Yona-kadhammarakkhita, went to the country of Aparāntaka, another to the country of Yonaka. Although Yonaka and Aparāntaka are mentioned as different regions, it is noteworthy that a monk connected with the Yonas was dispatched to Aparāntaka.

While, after the discovery of Aśoka's Kandahar inscriptions (Greek inscriptions) and of the Graeco-Aramaic bilingual, the question of the location of Yona has been considerably clarified, the question of who the Yonas (Yavanas) were, still remains debatable. This name occurs in many ancient Indian sources. It was generally understood to mean the Greeks or their descendants,[16] and sometimes "foreigners from the West" in general;[17] some scholars connected Yona (Yavana) with the Persians,[18] and others with the inhabitants of Gedrosia and Arachosia, which had been ceded to Candragupta by Seleucus on the conclusion of peace,[19] or with the inhabitants of Paropanisadai.[20] The suggestion has also been advanced that Yona should be interpreted as the Greek settlements—founded in North-Western India prior to Alexander's campaign.[21]

The suggestion that Yona refers to pre-Alexandrian Greek settlements, although it has been criticised, is, in our opinion, worthy of attention.[22] Its advocates lean on Arrian's *Anabasis* (V.I-2), which refer to a Greek colony in the town of Nysa (between the rivers Kabul and Indus), founded before Alexander's campaign. In Pāṇini's grammer (IV.149), evidently also written before the campaign, the term *yavanānī* has been preserved, which, according to the commentators, means "Greek writing".[23] Tradition assert that Pāṇini hailed from Śālatura (not far from Taxila), and could therefore have knowledge of the Greek settlements in North-Western India and the adjacent areas. In this connection the linguistic data of the Kandahar inscriptions are of great interest. An analysis of the Greek version of the bilingual record shows survivals of living colloquial language forms, which suggests a long tradition of its usage in and around Kandahar.

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The use of some rare forms of the Ionic dialect[24] speaks in favour of the supposition that Ionic (Greek) settlers might have lived in Arachosia before Alexander.[25] Numismatic data[26] provide yet another argument to support this view.

Kandahar was apparently a major cultural and administrative centre where the Greek language was widely used in the Mauryan epoch.[27] It was no coincidence that Aśoka's edicts are found in Kandahar. These, of course, were addressed not only to the residents of Kandahar but to the whole of Arachosia and perhaps to the neighbouring regions as well.

In all likelihood, Greek settlements existed not only in Arachosia but also in adjacent Paropanisadai. We have already mentioned the data from ancient writings on the Greek colony in Nysa. Worthy of note is the Ceylonese legend referring to the arrival on the island of a Buddhist mission from the city of Alasandā, the country of the Yonas.[28] It is possible that Alasandā was one of the Alexandrias founded by Alexander in Paropanisadai (near modern Kabul).[29]

While the Greek version of the Kandahar bilingual record of Aśoka was addressed to the Yonas, the Aramaic one, which incorporated a number of Iranian words,[30] could have been addressed to the Iranian-speaking population of the area. In Aśoka's inscriptions and in many other Indian sources, Yona is often mentioned together with Kamboja and sometimes even in the form *Yona-Kamboja*.[31] The evidence of the sources compared with the data of the Kandahar bilingual suggests that the Aramaic version was intended for the Kambojas, the inhabitants of the country of Kamboja, the location of which has long been the subject of heated debate.[32]

Professor Emile Benveniste who analysed the text of the Kandahar bilingual, put forward the suggestion that the Kambojas used an Iranian language similar to that of the *Avesta* (mostly as regards religious terminology).[33] This conclusion is borne out by what is known about the language of the country of Kamboja from Yāska's *Nirukta* (II.2).[34] According to Yāska, the Kambojas use *śavati*[35] for "he goes", which is related to the ancient Iranian *śavati* (*śav*-Avestan *śav*-, Ancient Pers. *śiyav*, etc.) and is evidence of the fact that the language of the Kambojas belonged to the Iranian group.[36]

In Benveniste's opinion, the Aramaic version contains

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indications that the speakers of Iranian in the Kandahar region practised Mazdaism.[37] This accords with the data of Indian sources on the religious beliefs of the Kambojas. Judging by a description in one of the Buddhist *Jātakas*,[38] they considered killing snakes, worms, insects and frogs a righteous deed.[39]

As has already been mentioned, the location of Kamboja has given rise to animated debate. The country has been variously located in Tibet and in the Hindu Kush,[40] south of the Amy-Darya,[41] in the Pamirs,[42] in Kashmir,[43] near Kabul,[44] etc.) After the discovery of the Kandahar bilingual, it is possible, with a greater degree of certainty, to locate Kamboja in Arachosia or a neighbouring area. Such a location is also borne out by the data of ancient Indian texts. First of all, the territorial proximity of Kamboja to Yona and to Gandhāra is confirmed by epigraphy and written sources. In the list contained in the Vth Major Rock Edict, Kamboja is mentioned between Yona and Gandhāra, which may suggest its actual location.[45]

The Buddhist treatise, *Sāsanavaṃsa* tells of a certain Mahāraṭhita-thera, who went to the country of the Yonas (*Yonakaraṭṭha*) and established the teaching of the Buddha in Kamboja.[46]

All these references make it possible to draw the southern border of the area supposed to have been inhabited by the Kambojas. Judging by the sources, it would be wrong to place this country too far north in the Pamirs and the Hindu Kush region.[47] As E.A. Grantovsky justly pointed out, references to horse-breeding in Kamboja are suggestive of broad valleys rather than of a high mountain area.[48]

In some sources Kamboja is mentioned along with the areas of Sindhu, Āraṭṭa in the Punjab, and Vanāyu (the modern valley of the Vana, north of the Gomal river).[49] In the *Arthaśāstra* (XI.I) it is mentioned together with Surāṣṭra, and in Varāhamihira's *Bṛhatsamhitā* it is included in the same group with the areas "up to the country of Sindhu and the Southern Punjab".[50] The Kambojas could have lived not only in the areas around Kandahar and in Arachosia but also in some regions of Paropanisadai.

In the north-east, Arachosia bordered on Gandhāra.[51] Some ancient Indian sources locate the latter on both banks of the Indus,[52] one part, with the capital in Puṣkarāvatī, lying west of

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the Indus, and the other, with the capital in Taxila, east of it.[53] This division may have survived even in the Mauryan epoch. In the edicts Taxila (probably the capital of the area east of the Indus) is spoken of as the centre of the main province governed by a prince of royal blood. Gandhāra seems to have been a separate region, listed among the *aparātā* (western people) together with Yona and Kamboja. Hence there are grounds to assume that, in the Aśokan period, the term "Gandhāra" was applied to the land west of the Indus, which bordered on Arachosia. This conclusion agrees with the evidence of post-Mauryan sources, which include in Gandhāra only regions lying to the west of the Indus, and with the evidence of ancient writers (for instance, Ptolemy)[54] and Chinese pilgrims.[55] Although Taxila did not belong to Gandhāra geographically, it played an important part in its political and economic life and in the political and economic life of the whole of North-Western India.[56] The Mauryan empire also included the regions of Paropanisadai which Candragupta annexed to his state after he had made peace with Seleucus. Paropanisadai was also part of the empire under Aśoka, which is borne out by the Aramaic inscriptions discovered in Laghman (not far from Jalalabad).[57]

In the XIIIth Major Rock Edict, the countries of Nābhaka-Nābhapaṃti[58] are listed after Yona-Kamboja (instead of Gandhāra as in the Vth Major Rock Edict). Many writers place them in Himālayas and in the Pamirs,[59] but the fact that they are entered immediately after Yona-Kamboja instead of Gandhāra argues against such a location. It would be more logical to place them in the vicinity of Gandhāra.[60]

The evidence of the Kashmiri chronicle, *Rājataraṅgiṇī* (I.102-106), and of Chinese pilgrims[61] suggests that Kashmir was part of the Mauryan state. The discovery of Aśoka's edicts in Mansehra and Shahbazgarhi, in Rummindei[62] and Nigalisagar,[63] Rampurva and Lauriya-Nandangarh, makes it possible to trace the northern and north-eastern frontiers of the empire.

The inclusion of some areas of contemporary Nepal in the Mauryan state is testified by later sources, including the Tibetan historian, Tārānātha.[64]

Some Chinese, Tibetan and Khotanese-Śaka sources have preserved a legend according to which Aśoka or his sons particularly his son Kuṇāla)[65] founded a kingdom in Khotan. From

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documents in Kharoṣṭhī it is known that there were Indian colonies and settlers in that country. They might have taken stories about Aśoka and his empire there with them. There are no reliable data as yet on the penetration of Mauryas into Khotan.

Judging by epigraphy and ancient writings, Bengal was included in the Mauryan empire. This is borne out by an inscription[66] discovered in 1931 in the excavations at Mahāsthan and dated palaeographically to the Mauryan age.[67] It attracted the attention of scholars immediately.[68] Professor Bhandarkar at once noted the great similarity between the language of this inscription and the language of Aśoka's Pillar Edicts.[69] Judging by its contents, it can be compared with the Sohgaura inscription, which scholars date to the early Mauryan period.[70]

In the Mahāsthan inscription, *mahāmātras* of Puṇḍranagara, the capital of the country of Puṇḍra, and part of ancient Bengal,[71] are mentioned. The fact that Bengal was a part of the empire is also confirmed by Ceylonese chronicles, in which Tāmralipti is described as a port in the Mauryan state.[72]

References in ancient writings to the Prasii (Prasioi) and Gangaridai, who lived in Eastern India, are of special interest. They were ruled in by Agrammes, whom we identify with the first king of the Nanda dynasty, and this makes it possible to relate them to the Nandas' state. The territory of the Prasii and cruel Gangaridai later became a part of Candragupta's empire.[73]

Diodorus (XVIII.6) calls the Prasii the greatest of Indian peoples. They were also known to Pliny (IV.22), who mentioned that the Prasii inhabited the land of Magadha[74] and that Pāṭaliputra was their capital; the Gangaridai lived in the delta of the Ganges and their capital was the city of Gange mentioned also in *Periplus of the Erythrean Sea* (§ 63), where it is described as a port in the estuary of the Ganges through which various commodities were exported. Ptolemy (VII.1.18), too, reports that the Gangaridai lived in and around the Ganges estuary and that their main city was Gange.

References about the Gangaridai provide further evidence of the fact that Bengal was a part of the Mauryan empire. Pliny identified the Gangaridai with the Kaliṅgas, who inhabited the territory of Orissa. It is interesting that in Indian sources the people of Bengal (the country of Vaṅga) are sometimes also

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associated with the inhabitants of Kaliṅga. Researchers hold different views on the question of the name Gangaridai (Gandaridai),[75] but it is undoubtedly linked with the Ganges river.

The fact that Kaliṅga was a part of Aśoka's empire is confirmed by the king's inscriptions discovered in Dhauli and Jaugaḍa (the so-called Special Kaliṅga Edicts), and by the reference in the XIIIth Major Rock Edict to the conquest of Kaliṅga.

As has been already mentioned, in the Vth Major Rock Edict, besides the Yonas, Kambojas and the Gandhāras, the Riṣṭikas,[76] Pitiṇikas[77] and other western peoples are listed.[78] A somewhat different list is given in the XIIIth Major Rock Edict, where the emperor declares : "The Dharma has been established by the king here (that is in this empire) . . . among the Yonas, Kambojas, Nābhakas, Nābhapaṃtis, Bhojas, Pitiṇikas [in the text : Bhojapitinika], Andhras, Pāradas [in the text : Aṃdhrapārimda]. All these peoples are not designated as "western" because the list includes such tribes as Andhras who inhabited the Deccan. Moreover, the Bhojas are mentioned this time in the list in combination with Pitiṇikas. As in the case of Gandhāra, this substitution seems to indicate a territorial proximity of Riṣṭika to Bhoja[79] This makes it possible to include the Bhojas, too, in the group of *aparātā* and to locate them in Western India. This location is supported also by the written sources, where the Bhojas are associated with Western India and the regions of Daṇḍaka (near Nasik) and Haihaya (near Narbada).[80]

The location of *Pitiṇika* remains unsolved.[81] Some scholars were even inclined to regard this word, not as a geographical name, but as an attribute of *bhojas*.[82] The location of the Pulindas (Pāradas), mentioned together with the Andhras has been much debated. Some sources suggest that they lived in Western India,[83] but there are also grounds to believe that they, like the Andhras, populated parts of the Eastern Deccan. A number of sources treat the Pulindas and the Andhras as peoples of Southern India (*Dakṣināpatha*).[84]

The Mauryan empire also included Surāṣṭra. The Junagdh inscription of Rudradāman mentions a ruler named Puṣyagupta, who, under Candragupta, built a dam on the Lake of Sudarśana. This inscription also records that in the region of Aśoka, under the governor-general named Tuṣāspa,[85] this dam was completed.

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Aśoka's inscriptions—copies of all the fourteen Major Rock Edicts—were found at Girnar (not far from Junagadh on the Kathiawar Peninsula).[86]

The areas farther southwards along the sea coast were also a part of Aśoka's empire. This is borne out by the discovery of his edicts in Sopārā, not far from Bombay (the ancient Suppāraka).

The inscriptions from Gavimatha, Pālkīgundu, Maski, Rajula-Maṇḍagiri and Yerragudi Brahmagiri, Siddapura and Jatinga-Rameśvar, all situated relatively close to one another in the present state of Karnataka, make it possible to draw the southern border of the state. It passed somewhere south of the district of Chitaldrug.[87] Aśoka's edicts make it clear that the southern province, with its capital in Suvarṇagiri, was one of the four main provinces of the empire. Scholars are not unanimous of the question of the location of Suvarṇagiri.[88] Its identification with present-day Kanakagiri (south of Maski in Karnataka) seems to be most convincing.[89]

Some other areas of Southern India are mentioned in Aśoka's inscriptions, but they are mentioned as lying beyond the borders of the empire: Chola, Pāṇḍya, Keralaputra and Satyaputra. Among them is also mentioned Ceylon (Taṃbapani), however, some researchers believe that the text refers to the river Tāmraparṇī in the south of India.[90] Of the countries mentioned, the location of Satyaputra has so far remained undetermined.

Thus, it was only areas in the extreme south of India that were not incorporated in the Mauryan empire, but there were close contacts with them.

The Mauryan state maintained close ties with Ceylon, thus continuing the old cultural and ethnic contacts, and it was from the Mauryas that Buddhism penetrated into the island in the 3rd century B.C. and became the official religion there. According to legend, this happened under Mahinda (Mahendra), Aśoka's son. Ceylonese chronicles refer to an embassy to the court of the Mauryan emperor and of friendship between him and King Tissa.

2. The Central Administration—the Authority of the King, the Pariṣad, the Sabhā

The process of establishing a unified Indian state manifested

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itself not only in the struggle for supremacy in Northern India between some state formations, which culminated in the victory of Magadha; it was also reflected in the setting up of a state machinery and the development of the principles and practices of central and provincial administration. The evolution of this system was one of the most important features of the history of the Mauryan empire, although its individual institutions had developed over a long period and emerged long before the seizure of power by the Mauryan dynasty. Many of these features can be explained only in a historical perspective.

One of the most debated questions connected with Mauryan history is the character of royal power, its origin, and the function and duties of the ruler. The purely Mauryan material relating to this question is fragmentary and not uniform. While the titles of kings, for example, are found both in the epigraphic (Aśoka's inscriptions) and literary (Buddhist writings of India and Ceylon, etc.) documents, information about the rulers' functions is extremely meagre. This accounts for the uneven degree of detail in different sections of the present book.

The formation of the empire had helped to strengthen the king's authority. This was reflected in the personal edicts of Emperor Aśoka and above all, in the *Arthaśāstra*, in which the king is regarded as the main among the seven foundations of the state (*rājya*). "The king and (his) rule, this is the sum-total of the constituents" (*Arth.*, VIII.2). His power at that time was hereditary, and after Candragupta's death the Magadha throne passed to his son, Bindusāra, and then to Aśoka. Inscriptions of Daśaratha show that the principle of heredity was also observed under the later Mauryas. This is also confirmed by the *Purāṇas* and the Ceylonese chronicles.

By this period the concept of *cakravartin* had apparently taken shape, and although in the edicts there is no direct mention of it, there is evidence testifying to its influence on the political ideas of the time.

The elaboration of this concept marked the emergence of new feature in the development of state and polity. It heralded the victory of the idea of centralisation against separatist tendencies, tribal exclusiveness, and fragmentation, even though the Mauryan rulers did not pursue a policy of complete abolition of the non-monarchical associations, the *gaṇas* and *saṅghas*.

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The concept of *cakravartin* seems to have been associated with the Buddhist doctrine of the righteous ruler, the essence of which is expounded in the early Buddhist texts.[91] It is interesting that the Buddhist writers, while insisting on certain moral standards and pious behaviour, at the same time stressed that the king had to be strong and powerful.

The strengthening of the king's power in this period is shown also by the evolution of the idea of the "fatherly" attitude of the king towards his subjects, reflected in Aśoka's inscriptions. The Special Edicts I and II proclaim : "All the people are my children."[92] A similar idea was expressed by Kauṭilya (II.I); but in the inscriptions it is more explicit.[93] This principle stemmed from a more ancient one—that the main duty of a king was the protection of his subjects.[94] It can be assumed that its appearance was due to some extent the influence of Buddhist teaching.[95]

The edicts portray the Mauryan ruler as the head of a ramified state administration, concentrating in his hands legislative, executive and judicial power.

In almost every edict this sentence appears time and again : "This inscription has been made on the orders of King Priyadarśī" or "King Priyadarśī has ordered this inscription to be made." The king's orders had become authoritative and compliance was strictly enforced. The author of the *Arthaśāstra* states that when established legal practices clashed with a government edict, preference was given to the latter (III.I). Kauṭilya was the first political theorist of ancient India to take such an attitude and to place the interests of the state above custom and tradition.[96] This was a clear sign of the growing importance of royal power.

As head of state, the Mauryan ruler, judging by the inscriptions, could personally appoint officials of any rank. The VIIth Major Pillar Edict, for example, refers to the appointment of *dharma-mahāmātras, rājukas* etc.[97] The Vth Major Rock Edict reads : "In the past there were no *mahāmātras* responsible for the *Dharma,* but after a lapse of thirteen years I have appointed [literally "created"— author] *Dharmamahāmātras*".[98]

The inscriptions contain instructions for officials of the central and provincial branches of the administration, and provide evidence to show that the highest officials were directly subordinate to the emperor. In the *Arthaśāstra* (I.8.9) there are recommendations to the effect that the king should himself choose his

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assistants, appoint high dignitaries and control their activity.

The edicts have scanty but very interesting data on the financial functions of the Mauryan rulers. They had the right to exempt whole villages from taxes or to reduce its amount (edict from Rummindei). Their judicial functions are reported in greater detail. The king played the part, as it were, of the supreme judge. As an inscription (IVth Major Pillar Edict) shows, Aśoka annually proclaimed an amnesty. He also introduced a three-day respite of the carrying out of death sentences "to enable the convicted person's relatives to appeal for his life to be spared". The Mauryas attached great importance to legal procedure and declared that their aim was to make justice prevail in both court trials and the meting out of punishment.

The creation of a huge empire called for a well-organised system of supervision and inspection. Aśoka declared, not without pride, that while in the past there had been no established system of inspection and reporting (VIth Major Rock Edict), there were now messengers obliged to inform the king of the concerns of the people. Megasthenes mentions (*Ind.*, XII.5) special observers "who kept an eye on everything happening in the province and in the towns and reported to the king."

In the *Arthaśastra* considerable space is devoted to the secret service. It describes how from early morning the king listened to reports on measures to guarantee state security, and received secret agents at night (I.19). Great attention was paid to the protection of the ruler's life. Megasthenes, who stayed for some time at Candragupta's court, reports : "The king may not sleep during the day-time and at night he is obliged to change his couch from time to time with a view to defeat plots against his life" (Strabo, XV.I.55). Kauṭilya's treatise contains a number of recommendations (I.20-21) regarding the king's abode and security: "Just as the king supervises others through his agents, let him likewise protect himself from the plots of others." Both sources relate that the protection of the king was the task of detachments of armed women who accompanied him during his campaigns and hunting expeditions.

In ancient India, as in other ancient oriental societies, the ruler was regarded as the organiser of all public works. Of special interest in this connection is the VIIth Major Pillar Edict, which

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suggests that Aśoka continued his predecessors' activity in carrying out many important construction projects including the setting up of irrigation systems. "Various undertakings," the inscription reads, "to make [people] happy [were carried out] also by previous kings".[99] According to the *Arthaśastra* (II.I.2), new lands were developed under the king's guidance, and buildings and fortresses were erected (II.3). The king had a duty to lead the people in their efforts to fight natural calamities such as floods and drought (IV.3), and to help the victims of these disasters.

On the strength of the evidence of the sources on the king's functions, scholars usually describe the Mauryan empire of Aśoka's time as an absolute monarchy in the legal and political sense of the term.[100] According to Vincent Smith, the king personally wielded state power.[101] This viewpoint, however, fails to notice some essential features of the Mauryan state system, and it has now become clear that the traditional views of its structure and administration must be modified and in many cases revised.

It is therefore interesting to analyse the titles of the Mauryan rulers, first of all, Aśoka. It is significant that, in his inscriptions, there are no such attributes of royal power as *samrājya*, *ādhipatya*, *mahārājya*, *svarājya*, which are so widespread in the Vedic and especially late Vedic periods. Everywhere Aśoka styles himself simply as "king"[102] and, in the Minor Rock Edict from Bhabra, as "king of Magadha" (*Piyadassi lājā Māgadhe*).

What can explain this "modesty" of the powerful ruler? Indeed, it was under Aśoka that the empire had become so vast. The Mauryas had extended their rule to many previously independent areas, provinces, tribes and states. Never before in the history of India had such a vast territory been under the rule of a single sovereign. It might be expected that the creation of such a great empire would lead to corresponding changes in the ruler's title. However, as mentioned before, Aśoka styled himself simply "king" or "king of Magadha". The explanation should evidently be sought in the political situation and the character of royal power in the epoch under consideration.

Most scholars have associated the use of the formula *Piyadassi lājā Māgadhe* in the Bhabra edict with the specific nature of the inscriptions addressed to monks on the occasion of the Buddhist council in Pāṭaliputra.[103] We believe, however, that the use of

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the title "king of Magadha" showed first of all Aśoka's desire to stress his links with the nucleus of his state and the crown domain of the Mauryan rulers. There grounds to suppose that even after their empire had taken shape, the Mauryas continued to regard themselves, first and foremost, as kings of Magadha. The tradition of the supremacy of Magadha was still strong at that time. Cannot then the fact that Aśoka had adopted that title be explained by his adherence to the custom which was followed by all his predecessors who had styled themselves in accordance with the name of their crown domain or even their capital (Pāṭaliputra) ? This supposition is confirmed by Strabo's report that the king of Prasii (a province of Magadha) accompanied the name he had been given at birth by the surname Palibothros "as it was done by Sandracottos" (Candragupta).[104] This supposition is also confirmed by a comparison of Aśoka's titles with those of the Magadha kings Bimbisāra and Ajātaśatru.[105]

Judging by the inscriptions, in the Mauryan epoch the concept of divine right had not yet taken shape, although earlier texts contain numerous indications that it was beginning to emerge.[106] Attempts at the deification of kings occur later under the Sātavāhanas and the Kuṣāṇas,[107] and especially in the Gupta epoch.[108] Mauryan inscriptions differ strikingly in tone from the Gupta inscriptions in this respect.[109] In the edicts Aśoka is frequently styled *devanāṃpiya*—"Beloved of the Gods". This title does not imply any deification of the king, but merely reflects the traditional connection between royal power and the gods.[110] There are hardly any grounds for supposing that in assuming the title "Beloved of the Gods" Aśoka was seeking any special support of the priests.[111] Romila Thapar explains Aśoka's attempt to stress the connection between royal and divine power by his desire to avoid any priests intermediaries.[112] The absence of an elaborate concept of divine power may also be explained by the growing importance of Buddhism, which opposed the exclusiveness of the Brāhmaṇic doctrine and contested the authority of the Brāhmaṇas, who were the principal promoters of the idea of divine right. In the period under consideration many of the ideas they were trying to disseminate received no official support. Aśoka's inscriptions set forth not the Brāhmaṇic idea of the divine power but the ways of observing the *Dharma*—the norms of pious behaviour for the inhabitants of the great empire.

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In the Mauryan period, survivals from the earlier polity continued to exist. The practice of electing the ruler, so widespread in the early Vedic epoch and still practised in the late Vedic and Epic periods, although it had lost its significance, had not yet disappeared. Arrian (*Ind.*, VIII.3), who probably used the evidence provided by Megasthenes, noted that "the succession was generally hereditary, but that when a failure of heirs occurred in the royal house the Indians elected their sovereigns on the principle of merit." Megasthenes did not make this statement explicitly in connection with Candragupta's empire, but one is tempted to consider it as evidence of real historical events which became known to the Seleucid ambassador during his stay at the court of the Mauryan rulers. It is also possible to suppose that Megasthenes' words reflect not mere traditional concepts, but the actual features of an elective system still practised in the Mauryan epoch. For the empire united a multitude of state formations, peoples and tribes with different traditional institutions of their own.

Under Candragupta the empire included the peoples of North-west and Western India, whose customs, according to ancient writings, were fairly similar to those described by the Seleucid ambassador. For the most part the data of the classical sources on these peoples are based on the reports of participants in Alexander's Indian campaign and therefore they deserve attention. Interesting information on the Kathaians (Kathaioi), who lived west of the Ravi river, and who put up resistance against Alexander, is given, for instance, by Strabo (XV.I.30). He writes that the Kathaioi elected their most handsome man as king.[1] This report agrees with earlier data provided by Arrian. Other early writers also mention the custom of electing rulers, which was practised by the peoples of North-west and Western India.[113]

Long after Alexander's campaign, classical authors made use of the reports of its participants and of Megasthenes' *Indica* in writing about India and its customs. Arrian's account is fairly reliable and outlines the specific features of the political organisation of the Indian people in the pre-Mauryan and early Mauryan periods.

This is also corroborated by local sources (late Vedic texts, Pāṇini, etc.), which state that the principle of electing rulers existed not only in Western and North-west India but also in

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Eastern India. The traditions which had a long history in those areas, seem to have survived even after their incorporation in the empire as semi-independent states.

Numerous references to the principle of electing rulers are found in the early Buddhist and early Jaina texts,[114] primarily in the *Jātakas*. Although such sources cannot be exactly dated to the Mauryan epoch, it is reasonable to suppose that they reflected the main features of the development of ancient Indian state and society in the latter half of the first millennium B.C. In particular, these texts mention a certain custom : if a king died childless, his counsellors would arrange a magnificent procession in the capital, at the head of which marched the king's elephant.[115] In accordance with tradition, when the elephant stopped near a man and lifted him on to its back, this meant that he was the new king.

The *Pariśiṣṭaparvan* mentions that the first Nanda ruler was elected in this manner. Of course, such reference in Hemacandra cannot be regarded as a proof, but the very fact that this late Jaina writer considered such practices possible in the Nanda period is surely noteworthy.

The following story of Trogus about Candragupta is very interesting : "This miracle was the first thing that prompted him to try and seize power . . .[116] When later Sandrocottus started war against Alexander's governors-general, a huge white elephant came over to him and, as if it were tame, lifted him on to its back" (XV.4.9). Trogus's account, which was later used by Justin, seems to be related to the above-cited data of the Indian texts. The local tradition was known to Trogus who connected it with Candragupta. (However, it should be noted that nothing is known from Indian sources to show that Candragupta became king in this manner).

In the Mauryan epoch, direct descent from father to his eldest son became the accepted rule. However, it sometimes happened also (as reported by the sources) that the king's counsellors would put on the throne a member of the royal family favoured by them.

Late Buddhist tradition (the *Aśokāvadāna*, Tārānātha) describes how Prince Aśoka came to power. He was not the rightful heir, and, moreover, Bindusāra had never concealed his dislike for him. Nevertheless, with the aid of the leaders of the court circle, he succeeded in deceiving his sick father and seizing the

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Magadhan throne. In relating the story of the life and deeds of Aśoka, Tārānātha notes that after Bindusāra's death "the residents of the capital city . . . called Aśoka and placed him on the throne."[117] This statement by the Tibetan historian, who lived much later, is not confirmed by the epigraphic data of the Mauryan period. However, it is worthy of note in the light of the references contained in various texts to the survival of the practice of electing the ruler in the Magadhan and Mauryan periods.

Of special importance in the study of polity is the relation between the king and the king's council, the *pariṣad.* It is possible to judge the place of the *pariṣad* in the system of state administration of the Mauryan empire from Aśoka's inscriptions and Megasthenes' data. It should be noted that the *pariṣad* is mentioned in many texts of earlier times. This term seems to have been applied at different times to different social, political and religious institutions.

According to the Mauryan inscriptions the *pariṣad* determined the terms of reference of the officials who controlled the activities of local authorities.[118] The interpretation of the concluding part of the IIIrd Major Rock Edict that we have offered[119] suggests that one of the functions of the *pariṣad* was to control the observance of the *Dharma* by the population. This does not imply that the *pariṣad* had merely religious functions as was maintained, for example, by V. Smith[120] and H. Deb.[121]

According to the VIth Major Rock Edict, the members of the royal council could gather of their own accord and discuss important issues in the absence of the king. In the case of disagreement between the dignitaries over a king's decree, they were to report to the king.[122] The *pariṣad* seems to have retained some independence even at the time when the vast empire was being formed.

A study of the history of this institution which, from the democratic body it was in the early Vedic epic, had turned into a rather exclusive council of high dignitaries,[123] makes it possible to assert that the ancient tradition, in accordance with which the *pariṣad* played a major role in the system of state administration, had continued even in the Mauryan epoch. Even such powerful rulers as Aśoka had to follow these traditions.

Fairly detailed data on the council of the king's dignitaries can be found in Pāṇini and in the *Arthaśāstra.* Both the grammar

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and its commentators use the term *parisadvala* (surrounded by the *parisad*) to designate the king. Pāṇini speaks of several types of *parisad*, including the political one, and mentions the activity of a secret council set up to deal with urgent matters (*ātyayika*).[124] Kauṭilya, on the basis of the ideas advanced by the early political schools, believed the councillors to be the basic element of state power: "A rulership can be successfully carried out (only) with the help of associates. One wheel alone does not turn" (I.7). He also distinguished an assembly of councillors (*mantriparisad*), whose composition was not strictly limited, from the more narrow group that was a kind of secret council.

The functions of the *mantriparisad* included setting the time for the beginning of new projects and for the completion of those already under way, the prevention of failures, etc. In an emergency and in highly pressing circumstances the members of this council and those of the secret council held a joint session[125] (*ātyayike kārye mantrino mantriparisadaṃ cāhūya brūyāt*).

It is noteworthy that the VIth major Rock Edict mentions Aśoka's urgent (*acayika*, Skr. *ātyayika*) orders to the *mahāmātras*, which were to be considered by the *parisad*.

According to the *Arthāśastra* (I.15), its members were high dignitaries, ministers, whose salary of 12,000 *paṇas*, was equal to that of the royal princes and the army chiefs. Kauṭilya explains this by saying that "with such a salary they help in strengthening the entourage of the master" (*Arth.*, V.3). *Jātakas* contain indications to the effect that the members of the royal council (*parisa*) were amātyās-officials (*amacca*).[126]

An interesting reference is found in the *Divyāvadāna* : Aśoka, wishing to discuss the current situation, convened his dignitaries (*amātyas*), and also the townsmen, *pauras* (or their representatives).[127] This evidence, although not exactly known to us from the texts of the Mauryan epoch, is noteworthy since it agrees with ancient Indian sources of various times.

Similar data are found as early as in the Vedic sources. For example, there is a reference in the Vedic texts to the participation by representatives of the town (*pauras*) and the inhabitants of the *Janapada* (countryside) in a coronation ceremony.[128]

Epic texts can also be cited.[129] The *Pariśiṣṭaparvan* (VI. 232) mentions the coronation ceremony of the first Nanda ruler, Nanda. The ceremony (*abhiṣeka*) was attended, along with the

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chief dignitaries (*pradhānapuruṣaiḥ*), by townsfolk and villagers (*paurair jahapadena*).

According to the available data, representatives of different social groups attended the sessions of the *sabhā*. Evidence of this kind is particularly copies in epic texts.[130] Early Buddhist and early Jaina sources, and even epigraphic documents of the post-Mauryan period, refer to arrangements for enabling people to take part in the discussion of state affairs.[131]

All this shows conclusively enough the important role played by both the urban and rural population in the state administration. Traditions of this kind apparently persisted for a long time even after the actual situation had changed completely. By the Mauryan times, the usual practice of securing the participation of the people in state affairs had already lost its importance. It is probable, however, that some survivals of ancient traditions still existed at the time and the Mauryan ruler had to reckon with them. Such survivals may have accounted for the fact that representatives of the townsmen were invited along with the dignitaries to discuss major issues.

In Aśoka's inscriptions, the *sabhā* (*rāja-sabhā*) is not mentioned, but an analysis of Megasthenes' reports and their comparison with the data of the ancient Indian sources enable one to suppose that it did exist in the Mauryan period.[132] Patañjali (I.I.68) refers to the existence of the *sabhā* under Candragupta (*Candragupta sabhā*).[133] This may tempt scholars to equate the assembly of the king's dignitaries and representatives of the townsmen with the *rāja-sabhā*.[134]

In his introduction to the *Samantapāsādikā*, Buddhaghoṣa states that every day Aśoka received a considerable sum of money from the *sabhā*.[135] It is not improbable that he meant the judicial agency or the law court, where a toll was collected from arrivals (it is known from the sources that the *sabhā* also carried out legal functions).[136]

Particularly noteworthy is the evidence of Megasthenes (and of Strabo, Diodorus, Arrian, Pliny, and Solin who followed him) concerning the "seventh class" of ancient Indian society. In characterising this "seventh class", Megasthenes distinguished within it two groups of officials whom he designated by different terms—*sumbouloi*[137] and *sunedroi tau busileos*. By the former Megasthenes understood the members of the *rāja-sabhā*, and by

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the latter, "those conferring with the king", or members of the *parisad*.[138]

The sources relating to the specific features of the central administration of the empire, and especially those relating to the exercise of royal power, call for a very cautions approach to the general problem of the state structure in the Mauryan epoch. The development of the unified empire and the formation of state machinery took place over a long historical period marked by a gradual transformation of old institutions and, at the same time, by the survival of ancient traditions which continued to influence perceptibly many aspects of the life of ancient Indian society. This process occurred differently, not only in different social and political spheres, but also in different areas which were at different levels of development.

The Mauryan empire included regions where traditional political institutions still functioned, and in some regions there even existed forms of rule antagonistic to autocratic rule (non-monarchical formations). Therefore, the nature of the king's power in the Mauryan empire should not be confused with the character of state power in the entire period or country.

The Mauryan emperor wielded the greatest power over the territory of the *vijita*, which was directly controlled by him and his agencies. The king's power, as the very term *vijita* ("conquered") shows, rested on the right of the conqueror. But even in the sphere of central administration, there were bodies (the *parisad* and the *rāja sabhā*) which, although they had lost their former importance, still retained a certain degree of independence and played a considerable part in the system of state administration.

An analysis of the available data indicates that even after the huge empire had been formed, the monarchical power had not yet achieved the same degree of despotism as existed in some other ancient oriental states. This necessitates a modification of the conclusion drawn by some scholars, that a typical oriental despotic state, with the power of the monarch unrestricted, existed in India in the Mauryan period. It goes without saying that further analysis, and elaboration of many issues which have so far remained debatable, will be necessary before the question of the form of state power in the Mauryan epoch is finally solved.

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3 The Taxation System

The treasury held a special place in the system of state administration. The levying of taxes was regarded as a major function of the state and of its head, the king. "As the Sun during eight months (imperceptibly) draws up the water with his rays", the *Mānava Dharmaśāstra* says (IX.305), "even so the king should gradually draw his taxes from his kingdom, for that is the office in which he resembles the Sun." The sources contain many discourses bringing out the idea that a full treasury is a guarantee of the prosperity of the state.[139] In his justification of taxation, Kauṭilya advances the idea that it is the ruler's prime duty "to supervise the treasury" (II.8). "A king with a small treasury swallows up the citizens and the country people themselves" (II.I). Manu also urges the king to give personal attention to these matters (VII.65).

The development of the taxation system can be traced from the offerings of the Vedic period to the obligatory and strictly regulated impositions in the empires of the Mauryas and the Guptas. Political treatises and *Śāstras* contain detailed elaborations of the general principles of taxation, specially emphasising the fixed amount of the taxes and the requirement to observe the established rates. "In levying taxes the king should act in full conformity with the *śāstra*" (*Mānava Dharmaśāstra* VII.80), that is, he should never exceed the established rates. Nevertheless, the king reserved the right to increase[140] or decrease the amount of taxes[141] in some special circumstances.

Many sources assert that a ruler raises taxes as remuneration for protecting his subjects. This idea is evident in all the *śāstras* and is also advanced by such an experienced politician and statesman as Kauṭilya : "People, overwhelmed by the law of the fishes (when big fishes devour small ones), made Manu, the son of Vivasvat, their king. And they assigned one-sixth of the grain, one-tenth of the commodities and money as his share. Maintained by that, kings bring about the well-being and security of the subjects" (I.13; Kangle's translation). According to the epics, a king who failed to carry out his protective function was regarded as a thief stealing the sixth share.[142] In the *Mahābhārata* this share is treated as a reward for the protection of the people.[143]

Written records of the Mauryan epoch proper clearly suggest

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that the taxation system in the empire was very thoroughly worked out. Aśoka's inscriptions mention two kinds of taxes: *bali* and *bhāga*. The Rummindei edict mentions that the village of Lumbinī, where the Buddha was born, was exempted from the *bali* and was to pay one-eighth part of the *bhāga* (*athabhāga*, Skr. *aṣṭabhāga*).[144]

Bali, one of the most ancient forms of impost, may have originally been a voluntary gift or tribute to the king, which later became fixed as an obligatory tax.[145] In the Vedic times this term was evidently used to denote taxes levied by the king on agricultural produce and cattle, and possibly also the tribute exacted from conquered peoples. In some Vedic taxts the term *balikṛt* ("bringing *bali*")[146] is used in relation to the population. The word *bhāga* was not used in that period.[147]

In Aśoka's inscription *bali* is mentioned alongside *bhāga* and is clearly distinct from it, although in the *Amarakośa* the two words are regarded as synonyms.

The term *bali* occurring in Manu (VII.80) is explained by the commentator Medhātithi as "a tax equal to one-sixth of the crop". This means that in this case *bali* was still regarded as "the king's share" of agricultural produce, which was normally denoted by the term *bhāga*. The use of *bali* instead of *bhāga* in the same sense is recorded in some other sources. However, in the Mauryan epoch the main term to describe "the king's share" was *bhāga*. Some writers believe that by that time *bali* had become a purely religious tribute,[148] but Kauṭilya's data show that it had remained a kind of levy in excess of "the king's share", one-sixth of the crop, *ṣaḍbhāga*.[149] Thus, Aśoka had not only exempted the village of Lumbinī from all extra dues, but had cut down the customary "king's share".

The evidence of the Rummindei edict can be correlated with the reference in the *Arthaśāstra* to the exemption from taxes of villages which supplied warriors (II.35), as well as of areas with poor yields and strategically important territories (V.2). Kauṭilya (V.2) specially notes that the king ought not to collect taxes from areas where he is building fortified towns and irrigation works or where new trade routes are being laid. Likewise, the inhabitants of border areas were not taxed; evidently, in such cases the king was particularly anxious to secure peace and the loyalty of the local population.

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According to Indian sources, the customary land tax paid to the head of the state amounted to one-sixth of the crops.[150] Sometimes this amount varied, depending on the quality of the land and the category of the landowner. According to Kauṭilya (V.2), a rural area with an abundant rainfall and rich cereal crops should pay a tax of up to one-third or one-fourth of the grain harvested. Bhaṭṭasvāmin, explaining *ṣaḍbhāga* as "the king's share" (*rājabhāga*), said that one-third or one-fourth of the yield was collected in some areas.[151] Gautama mentions land taxes amounting to one-sixth, one-eighth and one-tenth of the produce. In Haradatta's opinion, this difference was determined by the quality of the soil.[152] The same opinion was held by Someśvara, the author of the mediaeval work, *Mānasollāsa*.[153] The compilers of the *Mānava Dharmaśāstra* (VII.130) also pointed out the possibility of the king receiving one-sixth, one-eighth or one-twelfth of the grain. In discussing this statement, a later commentator, Vīramitrodaya, remarked that the difference depended on soil fertility and, correspondingly, on the amount of labour invested.[154]

The king could raise the tax from one-sixth to one-fourth of the crop in case of financial difficulties. In *Mānava Dharmaśāstra* (X.118) it is said that a ruler exacting, in an emergency, even one-fourth share but sparing no effort to protect his subjects is purged of the sin.

The evidence of early writers who, apparently, followed Megasthenes is of particular interest. According to Diodorus (II.40.5), the villagers paid a tax amounting to one-fourth of the crop yield. Since this figure is higher than those usually cited in Indian sources, some scholars regarded it as unreliable.[155] However, these data may have referred to lands around the capital on which a higher tax was imposed.

Strabo's figures are different. According to him, only one-fourth of the harvest was left to the tiller of the land (XV.I.40). He probably meant the royal lands, for he wrote that "all the land there belonged to the king". Indeed, those who worked on these lands, according to the *Arthaśāstra* (III.24), received only one-fourth or one-fifth of the crop.

Diodorus makes another curious statement : "They (i.e. the agriculturists) pay a land tribute to the king." Like Strabo, Diodorus says that "the whole of the country is of royal ownership

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and the farmers cultivate it for a rental in addition to paying a fourth part of the produce." In Romila Thapar's opinion, this statement could be linked with the fact that in some areas two forms of taxes existed : the basic one, the king's share, and a tax, equal to one-fourth of the produce, that was imposed on certain kinds of cereals.[156]

Besides those, who worked on the land, other sections of the population were also liable to be taxed. As is clear from Arrian's *Indica*, the third group of Indians, "herdsmen, both shepherds and neatherds . . . they too are subject to tribute, and this they pay in cattle" (*Ind.*, XI. 2). Strabo (XV.1.41) included hunters in this group; however, there is no indication in his text that they paid any tribute, but only that "they receive an allowance of grain from the king".

It is not improbable that these statements are derived from Megasthenes[157] whose authenticity is confirmed by the data of the *Arthaśāstra* and of the later *śāstras*. In the chapter "The Superintendent of Cattle" (II.29), Kauṭilya notes that both herdsmen and huntsmen tended herds for a money reward. This refers to the herdsmen who tended royal cattle. Obviously, Strabo's evidence should be taken in the same sense. The two reports differ only as regards the nature of the remuneration : Kauṭilya mentions money, and Strabo grain. Incidentally, the Indian statesman cautions at another place that milk and butter should not be used for payment as this might be harmful to the calves. Besides, in the chapter entitled "The Director of Agriculture" (II. 24), it is stated that the herdsmen employed on royal estates should be doled out victuals in proportion to the work done and also monthly wages of the amount of 1.25 *paṇas*. In other words, in this case Kauṭilya's and Strabo's data on remuneration in the form of food tally.[158]

According to Arrian, herdsmen "pay taxes from the herds they own". The author of the *Arthaśāstra* (II. 35) urges the chief tax-collector to gather exact information about the villages that pay taxes in cattle. There is no reference in the treatise as to the amount of the tax imposed on cattle-owners, but material on this is found in other *śāstras*. Judging by the *Mānava Dharmaśāstra* (VII. 130), the king received one-fiftieth of the herds.[159] The same is reported in the *Viṣṇu smṛti* (III. 25). In Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya* (VI. 3.100) a tax from cattle-owners[160] is also mentioned, but

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regrettably, without specifying its amount.

Regarding the taxes imposed on craftsmen and tradesmen Indian sources are in agreement with the statements made by classical writers. Strabo (XV.I.46) writes : "The fourth class, after herdsmen and hunters, consists of those who work at trades, of those who vend wares; and of those who are employed in bodily labour. Some of these pay tribute, and render to the state certain prescribed services. But the armour-makers and shipbuilders receive wages and their victuals from the king, for whom alone they work."[161]

Similar data are given by Arrian : "The fourth class consists of craftsmen and retail-dealers. They have to perform gratuitously certain public services, and to pay tribute from the products of their labour. An exception, however, is made in favour of those who fabricate the weapons of war—and not only so, but they even draw pay from the state."[162]

Thus, the craftsmen, like the husbandsmen and the herdsmen, paid a tax to the king. Only some among them, who belonged to the category of 'royal' craftsmen, received wages and were exempted from the common tax. The *Arthaśāstra* (II. 18) and a number of other sources single out as a special group the royal craftsmen (in particular, armourers) who received wages. However, on the whole, craftsmen and artisans were included by Kauṭilya (II. 6) among those liable to taxation levied by the chief tax-collector.

Indian sources confirm the Seleucid ambassador's data relating to tradesmen.[163] The amount of the tax, stated to be one-tenth or one-twentieth, also tallies.[164] It should be added that a special group of municipal officials, *astynomoi*, collected a tithe from the goods sold.[165] The state strictly and closely supervised the inflow of taxes : even Megasthenes noted that "tax-dodgers were punished by death".

In the *Arthaśāstra* the system of revenues is described at length (II. 6). The king's treasury received revenues from fortresses, mines, irrigation works, rural areas (*rāṣṭra*—literally "country"), from woods, pasture lands and trade routes. Among the revenues are mentioned incomes from the king's estates (*sītā*), the *piṇḍakara* tax, which, according to Bhaṭṭasvāmin, was imposed on communities, the *senābhakta*, i.e. a levy of butter, rice, etc., collected by the army marching through a region, and the *utsaṅga* (according to Bhaṭṭasvāmin, a duty collected from the population

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on some festive occasions, such as the birth of a prince).[166]

Some data on taxation in the period under consideration can be gleaned also from Buddhist texts. For example, Buddhaghoṣa mentions that every day Aśoka received from the town gates of the capital 400,000 *kārṣāpaṇas*, and his council, the *sabhā*, another 100,000 *kārṣāpaṇas*.[167] The possibility thus that such duties were levied is confirmed by the *Arthaśāstra*, in which a toll for entering the town gate (II.6) is mentioned.

Of particular interest is Patañjali's statement that the Mauryas set up images in order to earn more gold.[168] Unfortunately, we do not know the exact meaning of this measure, but it would be reasonable to suppose that financial difficulties made them set up images of gods in public places. The revenue that came from visitors evidently went into the royal treasury. This evidence of Patañjali agrees with Kauṭilya's opinion that on special occasions the king was entitled to take over the possessions of the communities of heretics and also the offerings to gods in temples. "The Superintendent of Temples should collect the treasures belonging to temples in the fort and in the country in one place, each separately, and bring them (to the treasury) in the same manner" (*Arth.*, V. 2).

References in ancient writings suggest that under the Mauryas some groups of the population, primarily the Brāhmaṇas, were exempted from taxes. Aśoka's inscriptions contain no direct references to this, but, according to Diodorus (II.40), "the philosophers are exempted from all public duties". The evidence conveyed by Strabo (XV.I.39) stems from Megasthenes: "He who gives sound advice (i.e. a philosopher) is exempted from paying any taxes or contribution."

Indian sources throw some light on this matter. In late Vedic literature there are references to the exemption of the Brāhmaṇas from taxes.[169] This idea is more clearly expressed in the *Dharmasūtras* and the *śāstras*[170] whose authors—themselves Brāhmaṇas—sought to legalise the following rule: "The king, even if in dire need, must not levy a tax on an expert of the Vedas" *Mānava Dharmaśāstra* (VII.133). A fine was imposed for the violation of this rule. Kauṭilya (V.2) did not recommend to the king the imposition of taxes on the property of the Brāhmaṇas even in the event of financial difficulties.

In the *Mānava Dharmaśāstra* an explanation is offered

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of why a Brāhmaṇa must receive special treatment. By his religious acts and services he prolongs the king's life, multiplies his wealth and ensures the prosperity of the state (VII.136). Thus his contribution is of a spiritual rather than a material nature. It is not without reason that some sources state that a Brāhmaṇa's tax is one-sixth of this religious contribution.[171] As to whether this exception should be extended to include the Brāhmaṇa caste as a whole or only some sections of it, the opinions of the authors of the "Laws" differ. Some of them, for example, Āpastamba (II.10.26), restricted it to the learned *śrotriyas*, the experts on the Vedas and the *purohitas*: whereas Vasiṣṭha (I.42-43) considered it necessary to extend the privileges to all Brāhmaṇas.

However, a Brāhmaṇa who failed to fulfil his primary duty, the study of the Vedas, and was engaged, say, in land husbandry, thus becoming a man storing up wealth,[172] was obliged to pay the established tax.[173]

Besides the Brāhmāṇas, the list of people exempted from taxes included children, students, and women (sometimes only specific groups of them), the blind, the deaf and the invalids. Sometimes "the kings's men" are also mentioned, that is persons in the king's service.[174] Apastamba (II.10.26) also includes the Śūdras who earned their living by washing the feet of members of other castes.[175] As to the practice of exempting Kṣatriya warriors in the king's service, Megasthenes mentions that "they were kept on king's money (Strabo, XV.1.47). The salary they received from the state was so considerable that, according to Arrian, they "could support with it other people without difficulty" (*Ind.*, XII.4).

This probably refers to professional warriors, who held a fairly high position. In general, warriors constituted a special group of the population, enjoyed the greatest freedom, and were occupied solely with military affairs, for, as the source has it, "their arms are made by others, their horses are procured by others; in the camp they are served by others, who groom their horses, clean their arms, lead their elephants, bring into order their chariots and serve as their drivers" (*Ind.*, XII.3).

The exemption from taxes of certain sections of society, primarily, the Brāhmaṇas and the Kṣatriyas, resulted in heavier impositions on the working people—the tillers of the land and

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artisans—and caused strained relations between the various *varṇas* and classes.

Megasthenes has furnished some data on officials in charge of the collection of duties. He includes in this group the *agronomoi*, who, according to him, collected taxes and supervised the methods of land husbandry (Strabo, XV.I.50). Megasthenes' *agronomoi* evidently correspond to the *rājūkas* (*rajjukas*) of Aśoka's inscriptions,[176] who headed the *janapadas* and had a wide range of duties (including the collection of taxes). In enumerating the revenues from the country (*rāṣṭra*), Kauṭilya (II.6) metions *rajjū* and *corarajjū*, which may also indicate a connection between the *rājūkas* and the treasury.

Among the higher state officials, Arrian names the keepers of the treasure and the fiscal executive (*Ind.*, XII.8). This evidence has parallels in the *Arthaśāstra.* There (II.5) the keeper of the treasury (who apparently corresponds to "the keeper of the treasure") is described as an official connected with the taxation system, although he did not take part in the collection of taxes. Judging by the *Arthaśāstra*, taxation was handled by local village officials (*gopa*), who supervised the revenues from five or ten villages, and also by district officials subordinate to the chief collector of taxes (II.35). The latter fixed the amount of imposts and supervised the accurate registration of villages and their inhabitants.

Aśoka's inscription from Rummindei makes it possible to regard a village as a fiscal unit. Written sources also speak about *grāma* as the lowest administrative unit. The same data are found in Buddhist literature, in the *Arthaśāstra*, in the later *śāstras* (for example, *Mānava Dharmaśāstra*, VII.115-116) and in the epigraphs of the Kuṣāṇa and the Gupta times.[177]

On the whole, an analysis of the sources shows that the Mauryas exercised strict control over the activities of all units of the taxation system and implemented in practice many of the principles elaborated by Kauṭilya in his treatise on polity.[178]

4. The Municipal Administration

The period under study was marked by a rapid growth of cities, and it is no wonder that Indian sources give so much

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attention to the status and regulation of all aspects of urban life. The administration of cities is the subject of a special chapter in the *Arthaśāstra* (II.36)—"Rules for the City Superintendent"—and other parts of the treatise. A fairly detailed description of the patterns of urban life has been given in the works of writers who followed Megasthenes. His evidence relates mostly to the capital of the empire, Pāṭaliputra, where he lived as an ambassador. Some data can be extracted from Aśoka's inscriptions, which not only mention cities and towns (Pāṭaliputra, Taxila, Ujjayinī, Iśila, Suvarṇagiri, Tosali, Samapā, and Kauśāmbī), but also provide evidence on their location.

Some interesting data are contained in the *Jātakas*, which describe officials heading the administration of a city or town and supervising public order, the city guards and tax-collectors.[179]

In Aśoka's edicts there is an indication to the effect that cities were divided into internal ones (*hida*) - evidently those situated in the territory of the *vijita*—and external ones (*bahira*). The former, among which was Pāṭaliputra, were governed by officials of the central administration, while the latter came under the jurisdiction of the provincial administration. The main towns of the provinces enjoyed a certain degree of autonomy. Taxila, for example, was even entitled to mint coins, which is confirmed by excavations,[180] written sources[181] and numismatic data.[182]

In all likelihood, the report that the guardians of the law in a city or town were *astynomi*, who were grouped into six bodies of five persons each, stems from Megasthenes : "The members of the first look after everything relating to the industrial arts. Those of the second attend to the entertainment of foreigners. To these they assign lodgings, and they keep watch over their mode of life by means of those persons whom they assign to them as assistants. These assistants escort them on the way when they leave the country, or, in the event of their dying, forward their property to their relatives. They take care of them when they are sick, and, if they die, bury them. The third body consists of those who inquire when and how births and deaths occur, with the object not only of levying a tax, but also in order that births and deaths among both high and low should not escape the cognizance of the Government. The fourth class superintends trade and commerce. Its members have charge of weights and measures, and see that the products in their season are sold by

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public notice. No one is allowed to deal in more than one kind of commodity unless he pays a double tax. The fifth class supervises manufactured articles, which they sell by public notice. What is now is sold separately from what is old and there is a fine for mixing the two together. The sixth and last class consists of those who collect a tenth of the price of the articles sold. Fraud in the payment of this tax is punished by death. Such are the functions which these bodies separately discharge. In their collective capacity they have charge both of their special departments, and also of matters affecting the general interest, such as the keeping of public buildings in proper repair, the regulation of prices, the care of markets, harbours and temples" (Strabo, XV. 1.51).

This report about the existence of collective municipal bodies responsible for the city life finds no exact analogies in ancient Indian sources, but is to some extent confirmed by the data of the *Arthaśāstra*. There we read about the division of the city into four parts, each headed by a *sthānika*—an official subordinated to the chief city official—the *nāgarika*. *Sthānikas* superintended *gopas*, who supervised 10 to 20 or 40 families of city residents. It is possible that the bodies described by Megasthenes bear a relation to the municipal administration system described in the *Arthaśāstra* (II.36). The Seleucid ambassador could have taken for a "class" the four officials administering one part of the city, and their head.[183] B.C.J. Timmer suggests that Megasthenes has identified as a "class" of five men a group of officials having different ranks but working as one agency.[184]

In the *Arthaśāstra*, as in Megasthenes, a strict control over the movement of residents and over those coming to town is mentioned (II.36). A householder was fined if he failed to report about persons staying in his house. (According to Buddhaghoṣa, Rājagṛha, the ancient capital of Magadha, had a special hall where travellers were lodged.[185] Through their agents, the city authorities searched houses, detained strangers, and organised round-ups in workshops, taverns, gambling-houses and vacated buildings. City life was strictly regulated. After nightfall the city gate was always closed and no one was allowed.[186] It was forbidden to walk in the streets at night or to stay near the royal palace after the curfew. The fine was fourfold for those who were delayed outside the city boundaries. Only the bearers of

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special credentials were entitled to move around at any time of the day or night.

Like the officials of Megasthenes' third group, the area inspectors described in the *Arthaśāstra* were obliged to know all the residents of their areas, their names, occupations, the castes they belonged to, the size of their families and, finally, their incomes.

Megasthenes' data regarding the officials of the sixth group, who collected the tithe, may be correlated with the *Arthaśāstra* evidence on the *sthānikas*, who supervised the collection of taxes. In the *Arthaśāstra* there are numerous references to the control exercised by municipal authorities over craftsmen (IV.I), merchants and trade in general. According to Megasthenes, the concealment of commodities from taxation was punishable by death. Kauṭilya recommended a milder punishment. Anyone smuggling goods through the customs was liable to the maximum fine (II.21) Merchants were obliged to report of those selling goods in an unauthorised place and at an unauthorised hour (II.36).

It was the duty of the city superintendent to keep the roads, squares, and the ramparts in good repair, which accords with Megasthenes' evidence. The city authorities were also responsible for keeping the city clean. Every house-owner "should make the dung-hill, the water-course or the well not in a place other than that suited to the house" (*Arth.*, III. 8). Those throwing rubbish into the street were fined, and the fine was doubled if this was done in the main street. A fine was also imposed for defiling shrines and temples (II. 36).

Kauṭilya's treatise gives some further information, in particular, on fire precautions. Most of the buildings in the town were made of wood, so the authorities took fire-prevention measures. In summer the lighting of fires in the day-time was prohibited and any breach of this regulation was punishable by a fine. House-owners were obliged to have fire-prevention implements – ladders, axes, ropes, tubs of water, jugs—and these had to be always ready for use (II.36). In the streets and near every house, thousands of vessels were to be kept. This was done also at crossroads, gates and royal buildings.

Discrepancies between some data in Megasthenes and in the *Arthaśāstra* are obviously due to the specific natures of the two sources. Although Megasthenes' impressions were often inexact, his data on municipal administration are trustworthy, for he

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observed the life in Pāṭaliputra in person. As an ambassador he probably had to have dealings at one time or other with the municipal authorities.

Although Megasthenes for the most part described the capital, the similarity between his data and those in the *Arthaśāstra* makes it possible to use his evidence for a study of the entire system of municipal administration in India. His data on the city council, made up of six bodies comprising five members each, can be considered as evidence of the self-government of cities and towns. In fact, the city council was the supreme authority, though, of course, in Candragupta's time, its members were no longer elected but appointed.

With increasing centralisation in the Mauryan epoch the importance of the organs of self-government declined markedly. The state was seeking to deprive them of their former rights and privileges and to bring them under its control. Nevertheless, some degree of autonomy of the cities, and some elements of the old political organisation in them, survived. This is borne out, in particular, by the division of cities and towns into four parts (*Arth.*, II. 36) – obviously, a survival of the ancient tribal structure—and the settling of members of the four *varṇas* in different parts of towns (II.4).[187]

In setting forth the rules for the supervision of citizens, Kauṭilya (I. 13) advises the secret agents to provoke conflicts in assembly halls. Āpastamba also speaks about special buildings for gatherings of teachers (II. 10.25). Unfortunately, we do not know the function of these urban institutions in the period under study, but, judging by the epigraphs of the early *Sātavāhana* period, they had not lost their significance even then.

One can cite, in particular, Uṣavadāta's inscription from Nāsik[188] stating that Uṣavadāta's gift was to be announced (*śrāvita*) in the city council (*nigamasabhā*).[189] The gift was also to be registered there (*nibaddha*).

Excavations also testify to certain independent features of some towns. In the vicinity of Allahabad, J. Marshall found a terracotta seal, dating approximately from the 3rd century B.C., with the inscription *Sahijitiye nigamasa* (the town of Sahijitya). It was found in the ruins of a building datable to the Mauryan epoch.[190] In a number of other regions, seals of the Kuṣāṇa and Gupta periods were found, issued on behalf of a town or a town

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association (*nigama*).[191] On coins from Taxila, dating approximately from the 3rd century B.C., the word *nigama* was punched on the reverse side, and names, probably of the city head and the ruler, on the obverse side.[192]

The data of late Buddhist texts on the political role of the inhabitants of Taxila are of much interest.[193] It is difficult to say whether they can be referred to the Mauryan epoch. As has been mentioned, by that period the citizens no longer took any important part in the discussions of major issues. At the same time, it can be presumed that individual city organisations had preserved some independence. In the Gupta epoch, a considerable role in the political life of a city belonged to *Śreṇi*—craftsmen's and tradesmen's organisations. Sātavāhana epigraphs and written texts (primarily, the *Dharmasūtras* and the *Arthaśāstra*) suggest that the *Śreṇi* enjoyed a similar status in the political life of cities in the latter half of the first millennium B.C.

Not infrequently the *Dharmaśāstras* refer to the *Śreṇis*' own "laws" (*Dharma*). Evidently, this shows that they were fairly independent and decided some internal matters themselves.[194] The city authorities had to reckon with these bodies.

Consequently, even in the Mauryan epoch, despite the strengthening of the state machinery, certain city organisations still managed to retain some independence.

5 Provincial Administration and Its Characteristics

The formation of an empire, which incorporated regions of differing ethnic composition and at different levels of social development, necessitated the setting up of a machinery of provincial administration which would run smoothly.[195] The main difficulty here lay in uniting a multitude of tribes and peoples, differing in language, religion and social system, and living in accordance with the ancient traditions of their ancestors. The creation of a single centralised system for the whole of the empire, the abolition of the local administration system and its replacement by new institutions could give rise to acute conflicts between the old local authorities and the new central power. The local aristocracy was a strong potential enemy of the Mauryas who therefore sought to build up such administrative machinery as would combine the already

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existing institutions with the newly created ones. The preservation in the provinces of administrative forms which had taken shape in the course of the development of the early state system, and their adjustment to new conditions which combined traditional forms with new ones, in no way clashed with the ambition of the Mauryas to build an all-India state. On the contrary, it was owing to this flexible policy that the previously isolated territories were finally united.

Aśoka's edicts contain data mainly on the administration of the provinces included in the *vijita*.[196] It is natural to believe that the administrative system there must have differed from that in the other regions of the empire. Epigraphy clearly shows that the Mauryan system of provincial administration was set up with due consideration for the special features of individual provinces, their geographical situation, previous status, traditions, etc.

According to the edicts, the main provinces with centres in Taxila, Ujjayinī, Tosali and Suvarṇagiri constituted special territorial and administrative units of the empire. Rudradāman's inscription from Junagadh also indicates the exceptional status enjoyed by Surāṣṭra. The system of main provinces, which were headed by princes of royal blood (*kumāras*) was no innovation of the Mauryas. They used the old form of state organisation.

Ancient Indian history furnishes many examples of the king sending his sons, first of all, the heir-apparent, to rule the main provinces of state. This custom was in existence as early as the time of the Magadha king, Bimbisāra. According to a number of sources, Ajātaśatru, the heir to the throne was the ruler of the country of Aṅga in the reign of Bimbisara,[197] while the ruler of Avanti (Ujjayinī) was Prince Aśoka. Numerous references (mostly in late Buddhist texts) show that this custom survived even in the post-Aśokan period.

The *Arthaśāstra* contains a detailed discussion of the relations between the king and his sons, and cites the views of representatives of different political schools of thought on this subject. Many authorities advised the ruler to establish a strict control over his sons, who, to quote Bhāradvāja, "are like crayfish : they devour their parent" (*Arth.* I.17). Kauṭilya, who approched the matter from a practical standpoint, advised the king to choose the wisest of his sons as heir to the throne.

Aśoka's inscriptions mention the province which had Taxila

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as its capital. References to this city occur in various ancient Indian texts : Pāṇini's grammar, Epics, *Jātakas*, *Śāstras*, *Purāṇas*.[198] etc. Indian and foreign authors depict Taxila as a prosperous city and a major cultural centre. This is confirmed by excavations. The city was an important trading centre and stood at the intersection of trade routes from Western Asia, Kashmir and Eastern India, which linked the interior parts of the country and North-Western India with the outside world.[199] Taxila was, as it were, the gateway to India, and this accounted for its great strategic importance.

According to ancient Indian and classical sources, by the time of Alexander's campaign, the city was governed by a local king and was very important. Alexander's biographers note that the ruler, called Taxil, accorded the Macedonians a hearty welcome and presented them with rich gifts. Taxil's son, Ômphis, who was appointed governor of the city by the Greeks, was also on friendly terms with the Macedonians. He remained in power even after the withdrawal of Alexander, though formally he was a dependent of the satrap Philip.

Under Candragupta, who liberated North-Western India from the last Greek garrisons, Taxila was incorporated in the Mauryan state. The relations between its population and the ruling dynasty remained strained for a long time. The incorporation of the north-western regions into the empire evidently involved the abolition of the supreme authority of the local rulers, which was bound to cause resentment to them. Candragupta, who fought against the Macedonian troops, could hardly be willing to recognise Taxila's ruler, who was so closely associated with the Greeks and had accepted Alexander's supremacy. The evidence of the *Divyāvadāna* and the *Aśokāvadānamālā* shows that the provincial administration was headed by Mauryan officials (*amātyas*), whose actions led to insurrections by the inhabitants of Taxila in the reigns of Bindusāra and Aśoka.[200] The clashes between the royal administration and the population of Taxila, recorded in late Buddhist sources and by the Tibetan historian Tāranātha[201] must have had deeper roots. Taxila was evidently unwilling to accept the loss of her former independence, while the central authority had failed to build a sufficiently flexible system of government for the new province. However, there is evidence to show that local elements still enjoyed a certain amount of

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influence.[202] The Mauryas had succeeded in incorporating this part of India in their empire, but the inclusion of this region, which had practically no economic ties with the Ganges Valley and which differed from the other territories in customs, state organisation and traditions, could not have been based on a solid foundation.

The political centre of Western India, which was also a main province of the state, was Ujjayinī. Legend refers to it among the country's seven sacred cities and it is mentioned in many ancient Indian literary and epigraphic documents. In early Buddhist texts, Avanti, with its capital in Ujjayinī, is mentioned among the sixteen "great states", *mahājanapadas*. In course of time, it is known to have become one of the leading states and to have struggled against Magadha for hegemony in Northern India. Under the Nandas, Avanti was a part of their state. It is possible that its special role in the history of the struggle between the *mahājanapadas* had determined its position in the administrative system of the Mauryan empire. The victory over Avanti did not mean the destruction of its might: after becoming a province of the empire, it evidently retained a certain measure of its independence. Aśokan edicts show that, along with other major provinces, it was governed by a prince of royal blood. Ceylonese chronicles and Buddhaghoṣa's commentaries mention that Aśoka stayed there.[203] The reference in the *Mahāvaṃsa* that Bindusāra gave Avanti to Aśoka may also indicate that a certain measure of independence was enjoyed by the prince as ruler of that province.[204]

Avanti and its capital had not only political but also great commercial importance. The trade routes linking Western, Central and Eastern India passed through this city. It was one of the transhipping points on the so-called Southern Road, leading from Rājagṛha to the mouth of the Godavari river and to the town of Pratiṣṭhāna (modern Paithan). This is confirmed by the archaeological excavations conducted in recent years.[205]

The capital of the province of Kaliṅga was the town of Tosali, the residence of a prince. The fact that this is mentioned in the second Special Edict emphasises the importance of this province. Through its ports, trade was conducted with the south of India and even with the countries of South-East Asia and Ceylon.

An analysis of Aśoka's inscriptions makes it possible to

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determine the status of the preceding territorial and administrative units within the framework of the empire.[206] The princes, who were rulers of the main provinces, were called *kumāra* (*kumāla*). According to the IIIrd Major Rock Edict they resided in Taxila, Ujjayinī and Tosali. The southern (Mysore) copies of the Ist Minor Rock Edict, referring to the ruler of Suvarṇagiri, call him *ayaputa* (*āryaputra*)[207] and not *kumāra*. It is possible that by calling the ruler of the South *ayaputa*, Aśoka wished to stress that the latter enjoyed a status higher than that of a *kumāra*.[208]

In the Major Rock Edict, the emperor enjoins that inspection tours should be made in the *vijita* to supervise the local officials. In Special Edict I from Dhauli and Jaugaḍa, he declares that he will personally send on a tour (*anusaṃyāna*) a *mahāmātra* official. As is known, the Special Edicts were engraved at various places in newly conquered Kaliṅga. Addressing the *mahāmātras* of Tosali, Aśoka spoke of the sending of an official, not by the local prince—the *kumāra*, but by the central authority. In other provinces—the North-Western and Western, with their centres in Taxila and Ujjayinī, respectively—officials of the same rank were sent on an inspection tour by the princes who ruled those areas : "and from Ujjayinī the Prince will send out, for the same purpose, a similar person (i.e. an official of the same rank) every three years (literally "before three years elapse"—author). And likewise from Takṣasilā.[209]

As we see it, the above extract shows a greater independence of the rulers of Taxila and Ujjayinī as compared to the prince of Tosali (Kaliṅga). This becomes even more obvious from an analysis of the IInd Special Edict. In it the emperor personally addresses the prince and the *mahāmātras* of Tosali. The higher organs of provincial administration were evidently under the strict control of the central authority and Aśoka himself. Besides, the fact that the prince is mentioned alongside the *mahāmātras*, and that they are directly addressed by the emperor, may reflect a certain limitation of the power of the Kaliṅga ruler. The Special Edict from Dhauli, in which Aśoka gives orders to the *mahāmātras* and the city court officials of Tosali directly, and not through the prince, is very interesting in this connection. The attention given by the emperor to Kaliṅga is attested also by his special instructions for the officials in Samāpā, the main town of region in the province.[210] In Tosali, the capital of Kaliṅga, there were a prince

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and *mahāmātras*, but in Samāpā there were naturally only local officials. Nevertheless, Aśoka addressed them directly, calling them *mahāmāta lājavacanikā*, i.e. "mahāmātras executing the king's order." The specific position of the Kaliṅga authorities becomes evident from a comparison between the special edicts and the Ist Minor Rock Edict. In this case the royal decree is addressed to the prince and the *mahāmātras* of Suvarṇagiri, although it deals with instructions for officials of the town of Iśila. The emperor here gives orders to provincial officials not directly but through the prince and the *mahāmātras*.

We believe that the special status of Kaliṅga was due to its (then recent) conquest and annexation to the Mauryan empire. The situation in the area remained tense even after Kaliṅga had been converted into a province of the empire. The emperor maintained this province politically and strategically important, the centre of attention and even included it in the *vijita*. This circumstance determined its greater dependence on the central authority.

In discussing the position of Kaliṅga, D.R. Bhandarkar noted its principal distinction from the other main provinces in the fact that it was governed by a prince and *mahāmātras*, whereas in Ujjayinī and Taxila the princes supposedly wielded autocratic power and were "practically independent".[211] However, the suggested contrast between other provinces and Kaliṅga, which was directly controlled by the emperor himself, does not seem justified. Although there were some unusual features in its administration, there is no ground to assume a division of the main provinces into two groups (one group including provinces ruled by a prince and the other including provinces under the joint rule of a prince and *mahāmātras*). Evidence to the contrary is found in the Ist Minor Rock Edict, which speaks about the prince and the *mahāmātras* of Suvarṇagiri. It is very unlikely that the ruler of the South was less dependent on the central authority than the princes of Taxila and Ujjayinī. The contrary is more probable : some data (already cited) confirm the assumption that an *ayaputa* (*āryaputra*) held a higher position than a *kumāra*. The silence of the edicts regarding *mahāmātras* in Ujjayinī and Taxila does not prove their absence (from other sources we know that high officials, *amātyas*, were present in those centres).

An analysis of Aśoka's inscriptions makes it possible merely

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to identify the various forms and the different degrees of dependence of the main provinces on the imperial centre. However great their autonomy might have been, they (contrary to Bhandarkar's opinion) never possessed "practically unlimited power". The fact that in Suvarṇagiri there was an *ayaputa*, who held a special place among the king's sons, was probably accounted for by the importance of the south in Aśoka's time. There are grounds to believe this to be the reason for sending a prince of higher rank to rule the southern provinces.

The elucidation of the status of *kumāras*, who headed three major provinces of the state, calls for a definition of the exact meaning of the term *ānusamyāna*, which occurs in the inscriptions only twice (in the IIIrd Major Rock Edict and in the Ist Special Edict).[212] The word comes from the Sanskrit verb, *yā*, which, when preceded by the prefixes *anu-* and *sam-*, has the meanings "to depart", "to move", "to visit", "to call upon", and "to alight". The context of the inscription makes it impossible to establish conclusively the meaning of this term in the texts concerned. Therefore, some data have to be considered.

There has been no unanimity in the interpretation of this word among scholars since Prinsep's time. Prinsep himself read *anusamyānaṃ* incorrectly as *anyśayanaṃ* ("repentence", "humiliation", "penitence") and misunderstood the message of the inscription as a whole.[213] However, even the correct reading failed to produce a unanimously accepted interpretation. For example, Emile Senart translated it as "assembly,"[214] and K.P. Jayaswal understood *anusamyāna* as the rotation of office in order to prevent the concentration of power in the hands of one man.[215] A different view was shared by H. Kern,[216] Radhakumud Mookerji[217] and E. Hultzsch,[218] who believed that in Aśoka's inscriptions the term had the meaning "trip", "inspection tour". Senart's interpretation is at variance with the text of the inscription, in which the word *anusamyāna* is used along with the verb "to go", "to carry out" (*niyātu, nikramātu*). Likewise, Jayaswal's interpretation contradicts the general message of the IIIrd Major Rock Edict and the Ist Special Edict.[219]

The most readily acceptable interpretation seems to be that offered by Kern, Hultzsch and Mookerji. This is proved by the data of the inscriptions. The Ist Special Edict, in which *anusamyāna* occurs, deals with the sending of *mahāmātras* by the

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emperor to check the actions of the local authorities. The edict reads : "For this purpose has this rescript been written here, viz. that the City Judges may devote themselves at all times to [this, viz.] that men may not be put in fetters without reason or be harassed without reason. And for this purpose I shall send out, every five years, Mahāmātras who will not be harsh, not fierce, [but] of gentle action, [and who], bearing this matter in mind, will carry out [this too] as my instructions are. And from Ujjayinī too, the Prince, for the same purpose, will send out similar persons (that is, officials of the same rank.—author) every three years. In the same manner also from Takṣaśila. When the *mahāmātras* go out on a tour, then, not neglecting their duties, [let them] know exactly this (that is, observe this edict.—author). They carry out (must carry out—author) the tour (*anusaṃyāna*) in keeping with the prescription of the king". This passage provides evidence in favour of the interpretation of *anusaṃyāna* as "a tour of inspection", etc.

Determination of the meaning of the term *anusaṃyāna* in the Ist Special Edict makes it possible to believe that in the IIIrd Major Edict it is used in the same sense. There can be some doubt only about the list of persons, who, according to the IIIrd Major Rock Edict, were to undertake the inspection tours. The inscription speaks of three ranks of state officials : *yuta* (*yuktas*), *rājuka*, and *prādesika*. A comparison of the preceding two inscriptions shows that they both deal with one and the same thing, namely, with the sending of officials for inspection purposes every five years, the only difference being that in the former case a *mahāmātra* was sent on the tour.

What could be the reason for this difference? There seem to be two possible explanations : either the officials enumerated belonged to the *mahāmātra* group, which denoted higher officials in general, or else, the word *anusaṃyāna* had a different meaning. The former supposition seems more likely, but it gives rise to a number of questions. For example, why were *prādeśikas* (provincial and regional officials) sent along with the *yuta* and the *rājuka* every five years and not every three years as the provincial rulers were ordered to do by the Ist Special Edict from Dhauli and Jaugaḍa? Evidently it was because there existed several groups of officials who fulfilled the same functions, but in regions either directly subordinated to the central authority or placed under the

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rule of the princes. In the *vijita* the inspection tours were carried out every fifth year, and in the chief provinces every third year.

In B.M. Barua's opinion, *anusaṃyānas* were at first made every fifth year both in the home (central) provinces and in the outlying provinces, but later this five-year interval became the norm only in the home provinces, while in the outlying provinces it was reduced to a three-year one.[220] Barua gives no arguments to support his view, and it is also not corroborated by the available data.[221] Indeed, as we have tried to show, the difference in frequency of the tours depended on the status of the province concerned: if it was part of the *vijita*, then, according to the IIIrd Major Rock Edict and 1st Special Edict, the tours were conducted every fifth year. We can cite, for example, the evidence of the Ist Special Edict concerning the sending of a *mahāmātra* on a tour of Kaliṅga. It might be expected that, as in Taxila and Ujjayinī, inspection tours would be conducted there every three years. However, from this edict it appears that the emperor sent out a *mahāmātra* to inspect the province every fifth year. Obviously, Kaliṅga, which belonged to Aśoka's *vijita*, came under this rule: "Let everywhere in my *vijita* officials—*yutas*, *rājukas* and prādesikas—make a tour (*anusaṃyāna*) every five years."

Great importance was attached to the inspection tours in the main provinces. According to the Ist Special Edict, the rulers of Ujjayinī and Taxila were to send round in their provinces an official of the same rank (*hedisaṃ eva vagaṃ*) as the one sent out by the central authority on a tour of the *vijita*.[222]

Further information on the rights of the princes can be obtained from an analysis of the functions of the inspectors who were given instructions by the heads of the provinces. A study of this is of interest also for elucidating the overall structure of state administration, particularly at the provincial level. In the Ist Special Edict, Aśoka speaks about sending officials on an inspection tour, and in the version from Jaugaḍa such officials are called *lājavacanikā* ("executing the king's orders"). Since the description of the *mahāmātras*' functions in the parallel version from Dhauli is almost identical to that in the Jaugaḍa version, the opinion held by some scholars that *lājavacanikās* were a special group of *mahāmātras*, can hardly be regarded as correct.[223] The absence of this term in the Dhauli version can be accounted for by the individual features of the edicts. The compilers of the Jaugaḍa copy gave a

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more detailed description of the inspecting officials who were to make their tour in keeping with the king's orders. The definition of *mahāmātras* as "those executing the king's orders" fully conformed to this requirement.

Participation in the tours was not a permanent function of the *mahāmātras*. According to the edict, even when making such tours they were not to neglect their main duties. They were to supervise the activities of the city officials, so that "there should be no unjust imprisonment of citizens [causing] unjustified sufferings to them". Aśoka strove for a centralization of the state, and regular inspections of the activities of the local officials furthered this aim.

There are reasons to believe that the functions of the inspectors enumerated in the Special Edict refer both to inspectors who toured the *vijita* and to those who made inspections in the main provinces. This is borne out by the edict which stresses that officials from Ujjayinī and Taxila were sent on tours in the same manner as in the *vijita*. The fact that the inspectors, besides carrying out their original functions, also performed the duty of spreading the principles of the *Dharma*, is not in itself a sufficient reason to identify them with the *Dharmamahānātras* (Bhandarkar's view).[224]

The early Pāli texts provide a clearer idea of the scope of the duties of the inspectors and conclusive proof of the fact that the interpretation of the term *anusaṁyāna* as "tour" or "trip" is correct.[225]

The data of the *Aṅguttara-Nikāya* clearly shows that inspection tours were regularly conducted in the *janapadas*.[226] Only in the border areas they were sometimes hampered by the activity of brigands. Aśoka's edicts deal solely with tours of the *vijita* and the main provinces, but the evidence of the *Aṅguttara-Nikāya* confirms our supposition that they took place all over the empire. An analysis of the inscriptions relating to the *āhāle* ("district"), and a study of its place in the system of provincial administration,[227] indicate that, on the emperor's orders, local officials (*mahāmātras*) were to make tours of the district, carrying the royal decree, and to send special officials to the outlying regions (*koṭavisava*).

The tours of districts in the Sarnath and Rupnath inscriptions resemble an *anusaṁyāna*, but, while the *rājukas*,

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prādeśikas and *yuktas* were made periodically (every five years in the *vijita* and every three years in the provinces headed by princes) to supervise the actions of local officials, the district *mahāmātras* were to disseminate king's edicts continually. There seems to have been one more difference—participation in an *anusamyāna* was an additional duty for the former; as the edict says, while making a tour they were not allowed to neglect their original functions, whereas for the district officials tours were part and parcel of their day-to-day work in the administration of their district (*āhāle*). Both *anusamyānas* and tours of districts strengthened the unity of the empire. The central authority exercised strict control to ensure that the king's orders should reach everybody concerned. Moreover, other important goals were also pursued : keeping under government control all areas and districts of the empire, including the fortified towns in outlying areas.

Buddhaghoṣa's commentary on the *Majjhima-Nikāya* gives an explanation of the sentence in the passage from the *Aṅguttara-Nikāya* which has been discussed above : "Inspection tours to the border areas (*paccantime jānapade anusaññātum*) are made for building houses in villages, for [the construction of] dams [and bridges], for digging water reservoirs, erecting buildings, and other similar works, as well as for instructing the people".[228] These comments supplement our knowledge of the duties of the inspecting officials and the purposes of their tours in general. It may be supposed that the tasks formulated later by Buddhaghoṣa were precisely those which had confronted the inspecting officials earlier in the Mauryan epoch.

The IIIrd Major Rock Edict mentions among the inspecting officials *rajukas* whose functions are listed in detail in the Pillar Edicts. An analysis of these data shows that the *rajukas* took part in organising public works, digging wells and reservoirs, and building roads. The correctness of Buddhaghoṣa's evidence is corroborated also by Special Edict Ist, according to which the inspecting officials were to fulfil their original duties even during the tours.[229]

According to the edicts, besides the four main provinces, the empire included various territorial and administrative units : *janapadas*, *pradeśas* and *āhāles*. The amount of information on these varies greatly; the data on *janapadas* are fragmentary, whereas those relating to *āhāles* are more detailed.

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A *janapada* was usually understood to be a rural area (as opposed to a town) and, in a broader sense, a province of the state. The term is used in Aśoka's inscriptions in these two meanings. According to Pāṇini, a *janapada* could mean both a region of the state and the territory of the entire country. The grammar reflected the period when a *janapada* was named after the people (tribe) inhabiting the area concerned.[230] In the *Purāṇas* this term means a country,[231] and in the early Buddhist texts, a region including such units as a *gāma*, *nigama*, *nagara*,[232] and sometimes a district or a country.

Kauṭilya (*Arth.*, II. I) subdivides a *janapada* (rural area) into four parts : a *sthāniya*, a *droṇamukha*, a *kārvaṭika* and a *saṃgrahaṇa*. The first of these embraced 800 villages; the seccond, 400; the third, 200; and the fourth, 10. It is hard to say whether this system had survived in the Mauryan epoch : the edicts employ different terms but, as in the *Arthaśāstra*, the lowest administrative and territorial unit in them was *a grāma*. A comparison between the treatise and the dated evidence of the period shows that the Mauryas had implemented in practice many of Kauṭilya's recommendations and had, in particular, subdivided the administrative units into rural and urban.[233] Evidence to this effect is found in the edicts and in Megasthenes.[234]

The evidence of Pāṇini[235] and the Buddhist texts,[236] and even that of the later *śāstras* shows that *janapadas* were sometimes not only territorial but also cultural units. This was due both to the tendency towards a seclusion of individual regions and social institutions, so typical of ancient India, and the survival of tribal traditions. In the period when large states were being formed, this seclusion was broken but a certain degree of isolation and a distinctiveness of traditions and customs remained.[237]

Manu's recommendation (VIII.41) that the king must know the *Dharma* of *jātis*, *janapadas*, *śreṇis* and *kulas* and should establish the *Dharma* for them to observe is well known. The same idea occurs in the *Yājñavalkya-Smṛti* (I. 361). The *Majjhima-Nikāya* (II. 134-135) can also be cited, in which the Buddha calls on the monks to adhere to the language of their regions (*janapadas*), for in every *janapada* the Buddhist terms and words are pronounced differently.[238] Apparently, in the Mauryan epoch the regions retained certain cultural traditions and a degree of independence. In this connection a statement in the XIVth

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Major Rock Edict is of particular interest : the emperor mentions different versions of his edicts since each region has its own distinctive features (evidently, linguistic).

Material is available to show that the *janapadas* minted coins and made seals, primarily in the Gupta epoch, but the practice had existed also at an earlier time.[239]

The *janapadas* were headed by *rājukas* (*rajjukas*), whose functions are described at some length in the edicts. Strabo,[240] using Megasthenes as a basis, subdivided officials into three main groups: rural (agronomoi),[241] urban (astunomoi) and military, a classification which is similar to the scheme given by Kauṭilya (XII.3)—*durga-rāṣṭra-daṇḍa-mukhyas*.

Like the *agronomois*, the *rajukas* were, as suggested by the inscriptions, concerned with the countryside (*janapada*).[242] Many of their functions were identical. One of the duties of the agronomois was to measure land; the same is said in the Indian sources about the duties of the *rajukas*.[243] According to Megasthenes, the *agronomois* collected taxes,[244] looked after the canals, built roads and set up poles showing "deviations" and distances after every ten "stadia". According to the inscriptions, the *rajukas* also took part in organising public works, digging reservoirs, building roads,[245] etc.

Megasthenes reports that the *agronomois* were in charge of rewarding and punishing "those who deserved it," i.e., they had to reward and punish. Similar evidence is found in Aśoka's inscriptions : "*Rajjukas* have been appointed by me to carry out their duties without any fear or profit for themselves . . . Therefore I have granted the *rajjukas* the right to [use] rewards (incentive) (*abhihāle*) and punishments (*daṇḍa*)."[246] In Aśoka's other edicts the judiciary functions of the *rajukas* are mentioned,[247] although they were not specifically legal officials. It is noteworthy that Megasthenes also distinguished the *agronomois* from the *asṭunomois*.[248]

The variety of functions carried out by the *agronomois* led some scholars (Nilakanta Sastri, for example) to believe that the Seleucid ambassador was referring to several groups of officials; however, ancient Indian sources bearing upon the *rājukas* confirm Megasthenes' statement. According to the edicts, the *rajukas* possessed considerable power : as the version of the edict from Yerraguḍi states, they were to instruct elephant drivers, scribes, charioteers and Brāhmaṇas, and to acquaint the population of

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their *janapada* and the *raṭhikas* (evidently, the district officials subordinate to the *rajukas*) with the king's decrees.

An *āḥāle* (Skr. *āhāra*) was a territorial and administrative unit smaller than a *janapada*. References to it are found in the Ist Major Rock Edict from Rupnath and in the Minor Pillar Inscription from Sarnath.[249] These references make it possible to reconstruct the general pattern of the district administration system. Therefore, it is hard to agree with Ramachandra Dikshitar that a student of Mauryan history cannot get an insight into its organisation.[250]

The use of the term *āhāle* in the edicts written at different times and intended for different regions of the country shows that it was common to the entire administrative system.[251]

Districts were headed by *mahāmātras*,[252] who were to circulate the king's decrees over the area entrusted to them and to send out officials of a lower rank to all, even the most remote places (*visaya*, Skr. *viṣaya*) and fortified camps.[253] A staff of scribes evidently prepared copies of these edicts. It appears from the closing passages of the Rupnath and Sarnath inscriptions that their texts were displayed in the chancellery (*saṃsalana*), where the district officials could get acquainted with them.[254]

Unfortunately, Aśoka's edicts do not have any data on the status and place, within the provincial administrative system, of the lowest administrative unit, the village—*grāma*, but other sources (Buddhist and Jaina texts, the *Arthasāstra*, etc.) make it possible to fill in this gap to some extent. We know about the village head, who was gradually turning into a representative of the state authorities, and about officials who performed various functions (judicial, financial), and about various organs of local self-government which, with time, lost their independence and power.[255] The Buddhist texts mention that King Bimbisāra called together the village heads (*grāmika*) to discuss a number of matters.[256]

Aśoka's inscriptions mention officials of other ranks: *prādesikas*, *vrajabhūmikas*, and *aṃtamahāmātras*.

Prādesikas seem to have been regional officials with a wide range of duties. Together with the *rājukas*, they undertook inspection tours[257] and probably carried out judicial and fiscal functions. According to the *Arthasāstra*, the *pradeṣṭrās* tried criminal cases, prosecuted thieves, and were responsible for the collection of taxes. Their salary was 8,000 *paṇas*.

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Amta-mahāmātras, who can be identified with the *antapālas* of Kauṭilya's treatise, were officials in charge of the administration and defence of the frontiers. The fact that an *antapāla's* salary was equal to that of a member of the *pariṣad*, a prince of royal blood or a city official, shows that their status was evidently high.[258]

Thus Aśoka's inscriptions make it possible to get an insight into the general principles of state policy. The Kaliṅga edicts are of particular interest in this respect. The emperor enjoined the officials to spare no effort to spread the slogan : "for us, the king is like a father" (Kauṭilya also speaks about a "fatherly attitude"), warned them against excessive haste in deciding important state matters and advised them to exercise impartiality. Lack of self-restraint, indolence and envy are mentioned as vices incompatible with the status of a state official.

They were to carry out the king's orders and decrees without demur. "You have much at your disposal", Aśoka said, addressing the *mahāmātras* of Kaliṅga, "but you have failed to do all that could be done."[259]

A characteristic feature of state administration in the Mauryan empire was the strict control exercised by the central authority over all aspects of the country's life. It sought to subordinate various provincial institutions. On the other hand, the extent of the centralisation and bureaucratisation of the state machinery should not be overestimated.[260] They may have been typical in some sense only of the territory of the *vijita*. In the provinces, especially in the remote ones, the tendency for autonomy was quite strong.

As has been mentioned before, the Mauryas did not pursue a policy of undermining local institutions, but tried to adapt them to the new conditions. This was manifest in their attitude towards the non-monarchical formations and provinces. The state gave consideration to their former status and traditions. The ruling dynasty had taken over from its predecessors certain specific features of judicial and fiscal organisation. The state system it had created survived (with some modifications) into later times,[261] including the period of the Guptas.

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6 Gaṇas and Saṅghas in the Mauryan Epoch: Sources and Problems

Studies conducted over the past few years have led to a re-examination of the theories previously predominant that despotism was a universal state form in the ancient Orient. At present there are grounds to assert that in many countries (Mesopotamia, the Hittite kingdom, Nubia) it was preceded by other, more democratic, forms of government.[262] Unfortunately, in studying this question, the data of Indian history have not been used sufficiently, although they are of utmost importance for a general understanding of the matter as a whole, for alongside the monarchies, there existed non-monarchical (republican) formations—*gaṇas* and *saṅghas*. These formations played an important role in the history of ancient India, and to ignore the evidence of their internal organisation would be to give a false picture of the special features of state power in India in ancient times, including the Mauryan epoch.

The problem of the *gaṇas* and the *saṅghas* has been repeatedly discussed, but so far no consensus of opinion has been reached. There is no unanimity even as regards the translation of the terms. Nor has an exact analysis of the data on the political and social status of these formations been given, although interest in the history of the republics has increased considerably in recent times.[263]

The well-known English Indologist, T. Rhys Davids, was the first to give due attention to the *saṅghas* and *gaṇas*, but in his work, *Buhdhist India*, he described them as clans, and failed to point out the considerable differences in the levels of their development.[264] For a long time all the *gaṇas* and *saṅghas* were considered to be tribes.[265] Later a theory proposed by the Indian scholar, K.P. Jayaswal, became fashionable. Jayaswal went to the other extreme by declaring them to have been republics.[266] It has been pointed out, with some justification, that Jayaswal's study was written in order to refute the assertion often made by representatives of the British ruling class that democratic parliamentary institutions were not suitable for India, and to show that even in ancient India there had existed republics and a self-governing democracy.[267] A tendency to bring the political formations denoted by the terms *gaṇa* and *saṅgha*[268] under a single definition can be traced also in some recent studies.[269]

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There is a marked difference of opinion as to how to evaluate the *gaṇas* and the *saṅghas* and interpret the data on them given in various sources.[270] It is clear that a systematic analysis of the features of the internal structure of *gaṇas* and *saṅghas* and their political and social organisation would be of interest.

A study of the sources that can be conditionally related to the period of the formation of states in the Ganges Valley shows that between the 6th and 3rd centuries B.C., some *gaṇas* and *saṅghas* were states with a non-monarchical (republican) form of government.[271] At the same time, utmost caution should be exercised in defining all these political formations as states, for the terms could also denote certain primitive communities of people.

Gaṇas are mentioned in Vedic literature, the term occurs in the *Ṛgveda*. At that period they were just tribal associations.[272] The military character of their organisation is generally stressed. Every adult man was entitled to carry weapons. These associations later developed into class societies and then into states, becoming either monarchies or republics, depending on a number of circumstances. The sources suggest two ways of the formation of the latter : the first, more common way was the development of a republic from societies of the "period of military democracy". Although it would be premature to speak about a direct genetic relationship between the Vedic *gaṇas* and the republics of the Magadha and Mauryan periods, a similarity between the forms of their political organisation is evident.[273] The second way was a transition from monarchical rule to republican and the appearance of *gaṇas* as a result of the fall of a monarchy. Such, for instance, was the history of Vaiśālī, where originally there was monarchical rule which was later replaced by republican power.

The existence of *gaṇas* and *saṅghas* is well known from relatively later sources. The epics (in particular the *Mahābhārata*), which reflected developments over a long historical period, mention various political formations. Some of these can be safely regarded as non-monarchical (republican) states, while others had not outgrown the tribal type of organisation.[274]

The most important material on this interesting question is to be found in the Buddhist Pāli Canon, which can be explained by a number of circumstances. According to legend, the Buddha

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came from the *gaṇa* of the Śākyas and it was there, and also in the *saṅghas* and *gaṇas* of the Ganges Valley, and particularly among the Licchhavis and the Mallas, that he soon found a following.[275] The structure of these formations exerted an influence on the internal structure of the Buddhist community, the *saṅgha*.[276] It is no coincidence that the principles of their organisation are compared in the *Mahāparinibbāna-sūtta*. Finally, *gaṇas* and *saṅghas* were widespread in that period and played an important role in the political life of Northern India.

Of special interest for the study of the *gaṇas* and the *saṅghas* are Pāṇini's grammatical work,[277] the writings of his later cammentators (Kātyāyana and Patañjali), and also the *Arthaśāstra*. Pāṇini (V. 3. 114-117) and his commentators (Kātyāyana on Pāṇini, IV.1.168) who considered the *saṅghas* as a form of state organisation different from a monarchy, divided them into two groups. One embraced "*saṅghas* living by force of arms" (*āyudhajīvī sāṅghas*); apparently, these were mostly associations of the period of military democracy. Of these, there were two categories *vrāta* and *pūga*, specially mentioned by Pāṇini. These were territorial communities that retained features of various stages of the tribal structure. Apart from these, politically developed *saṅghas* (republics) are also mentioned by Pāṇini and his commentators.

The *Arthaśāstra* data on the *saṅghas* are important primarily because they reveal the policy pursued by the monarchies towards these political formations, which, in all likelihood, possessed a considerable military potential. Kauṭilya had reason to warn the autocratic rulers that winning over the *saṅghas* to their side (*saṅgha-lābha*) was more important than acquiring troops or allies, for, "being closely knit, the *saṅghas* cannot be conquered by enemies" (XI.I).

The sources draw a clear distinction between the *janapadas* governed by a single ruler (*eka-rāja*) and those governed by a *gaṇa* or *saṅgha*.[278] In particular, this distinction is made in the Buddhist texts. It is recounted in the *Avadāna-śataka*, for example, that merchants from Middle India (*Madhyadeśa*) who had come to the south, when asked by a local king who ruled in their countries (*kastatra rājeti*), said : "Some countries (*deśa*) are under the power of kings (*rāja-adhīna*) and others under the power of *gaṇas* (*gaṇa-adhīna*).[279]

The *Cīvaravastu* refers to the chief dignitary (*agrāmātya*) of

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the king of Magadha, who, having fallen victim to slander and fearing severe punishment, decides to flee the country. "But where shall I go?" he ponders. "In Śrāvastī there reigns a king. The same situation obtains in Vārāṇasī, Rājagṛha and Campā. This means that the power there is in the hands of one (*ekādhinatva*), while in Vaiśālī the *gaṇa* is in power (*gaṇa-adhīna*) and what is accepted by ten [may be] rejected by twenty.[280]

The Jaina source, *Ācārāṅga-sūtra* (I.3.160), lists, besides monarchies, countries where there was no king (*Arāyāni*) where a young prince (*yuvarāya*) ruled, where the power was shared by two monarchs (*dorājjani*) and, finally, countries where power was in the hands of the *gaṇa* (*gaṇarāya*).[281] For Indians of ancient times the existence of countries with non-monarchical rule (with power in the hands of a *gaṇa* or *saṅgha*) was not an uncommon phenomenon.

It is significant that Indian sources regard the *gaṇas* and the *saṅghas* not as states in which the autocratic ruler is temporarily missing, but as a special kind of state, quite natural and legal, even though they have a form of government different from that of a monarchy. True, in the Brāhmaṇic texts—which seek to prove the ever-lasting nature of the division into the twice-born and the once-born and the immunity of the king as the chief protector of the "purity of the *varṇas*"—countries not recognising autocratic power (*arājakarāṣṭra*) are frequently condemned. The social structure of the *gaṇas* and the *saṅghas*, so different from the ideals of the orthodox Brāhmaṇas, caused them indignation. They went out of their way to emphasise the deviations from the rightful way of living and inner weakness of these formations torn by anarchy, where the strong devoured the weak, where free men became slaves (*adāsaḥ kryato dāso*), where no one was able to enjoy his property, and where trade and economy were in a state of stagnation.[282] (However, not all *gaṇas* are described in the epics in this fashion. Conflicting assessments, even in one and the same source, are accounted for by a number of factors, in particular, by the influence of individual state formations on political life. Indeed, for a long time they were serious rivals of the monarchical states in their struggle for hegemony in Northern India.) This is in a sharp contrast to the picture of the *gaṇas* and the *saṅghas* drawn in Buddhist and Jaina legends, where they are depicted as strong and prosperous.

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The Greeks who had taken part in Alexander's campaign—and on whose reports about the peoples of India (primarily those of North-Western India) much of classical sources are based—also distinguished between regions under a king's rule (for example, the states of Porus, Āmbhi, Taxil or Abisāra) and the so-called autonomous *autonomoi*, independent countries and *polises*. This is stated with particular clarity in Diodorus (I. 39) : "Most *polises* had become democratic (had received democratic rule), whereas some peoples had retained the king's rule up to the time of Alexander's campaign." A division of the territories according to the form of state organisation into two categories—monarchical and non-monarchical—is also noted by Megasthenes. In discussing the sixth class of the population, the overseers, he wrote : "They (*ephozoi*) ... report everything to the king and, in the case of a town (*polis*) which is not under a king's rule, (*abasileutos*), to the magistrates (Diodorus, II.50). Megasthenes also noted that in India agriculturists paid taxes to kings or to self-governing *polises* (*Ind.*, XI. 9). It is noteworthy that many state formations in North-Western and Western India, which were classified by the Greeks as "autonomous" *polises* and regions, are called *saṅghas* and *gaṇas* in the Indian sources.

The writers who took part in Alexander's campaign, and also the Seleucid ambassador, reported that the Indians in the autonomous areas were not backward barbarian tribes but prosperous peoples; many of them had a well-developed political organisation which, to quote Diodorus (XVII.91), made "a strong impression".

An analysis of classical sources on "autonomous" *polises* and regions, which on the whole correspond to the *saṅghas* and *gaṇas*, makes it possible to identify some distinctive features of their political organisation : the absence of an autocratic hereditary ruler, the election of the elders and the head, the existence of different forms of government (democratic and oligarchical), the preservation in some of them of the important role of the council of the nobility and the considerable influence of the council of elders.

Indian sources refer mostly to the largest and politically highly organised state formations of this type : the Licchavis, the Śākyas, the Mallas, the Koliyas, the Mālavas and the Kṣūdrakas.[283] Therefore, the conclusions based on such sources can be justifiably applied only to the *gaṇas* and *saṅghas* which were states (presumably

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republics ruled by an aristocracy), although all of them had some features of social structure in common.

A further note is essential. It is difficult to be precise about the dating of the Indian sources being on the *gaṇas* and *saṅghas*. The evidence of those that can be roughly assigned to a period between the 6th and the 3rd centuries B.C. will thus have to be considered as a whole, without any chronological differentiation. But it must be borne in mind that within this considerable time bracket and beyond this period internal changes were bound to have taken place in the political and social structure of the *gaṇas* and the *saṅghas*. For example, while in the 6th-5th centuries B.C. some of them were still tribal formations, in the first centuries A.D. they were already well-developed states, which even minted coins on behalf of the *gaṇas*.[284]

Scholars will have to make specialized studies of the history of the individual formations.

Economic Development and Social Structure

In the sources the republics are described as countries with large cities, and well-developed crafts and trade. According to the *Mahāvagga* (VIII.I.I), Vaiśālī "abounded in foodstuffs". A similar picture is drawn in the *Lalitavistara*.[285] Kapilavastu was rich and densely populated. In the capitals of the *gaṇas* there lived various groups of craftsmen who were apparently united in special guilds (*śreṇis*) headed by aldermen (*śreṣṭhin*). Merchants also had their own associations.[286] In all likelihood, trade was very profitable, since, according to a statement of Buddaghoṣa, not only the Vaiśyas but also the Kṣatriyas,[287] who fitted out caravans, engaged in it. Trade routes linked the capitals of the individual rupublics—Kuśīnagara and Pāvā,[288] Vaiśālī and Kapilavastu.[289]

Unfortunately, nothing is known about the relations between the central authority and the craftsmen and merchants, but it would be reasonable to presume that they were subordinate to the *gaṇa* and were obliged to abide by its decrees. They evidently paid taxes. We know from Buddhaghoṣa's *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī* (I. 338) about the existence of certain imposts. A toll was levied on travellers passing through the gate in Vaiśālī. The fact that

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they used money in commerce and trade is an indication of the high level of economic development in some *gaṇas*. The first centuries A.D. are especially rich in evidence of this kind.

The population mainly engaged in agriculture. Part of the land was probably owned by the *gaṇa*. It is noteworthy that when a dispute over the distribution of irrigation water arose between the Śākyas and the neighbouring Koliyas (another republican association), the slaves and the *karmakaras* of the two states appealed to the officials and *kṣatriyarājas*, who stood at the head of the republics. Obviously, this dispute was about state-owned fields and not private holdings. The same conclusion is suggested by Buddhaghoṣa's commentary on the *Dīgha-Nikāya*.

There also existed a private land tenure in the *gaṇas*. The big landowners were mostly members of the military aristocracy, and probably well-off Vaiśyas.

The Jaina source, *Uvāsagadasāo*, tells of a house-owner (*gāhapati*) from the *gaṇa* of the Licchavis who, having become a follower of Mahāvīra, decided to renounce his wealth (*khettavathu*) and retained for himself only 500 ploughs with 100 *niyattanas* (Skr. *nivartana*) of land for each plough and only four herds (each of 10,000 head of cattle).[290] The figures given in the text are, of course, much exaggerated (a traditional description of wealth), but the description itself is noteworthy as indicative of the concentration of considerable landed estates in the hands of a single owner.

There is no doubt that the passage in the *Mahāvastu* (III. 176-178), in which a house-owner is advised to supervise his slaves, workers and servants so that his land in the village and his property should be well looked after, the work done regularly checked, and cereals of different sorts sown, fenced off, harvested, and examined, refers to the private household of a Kṣatriya. Similar data are found in the Pāli *Vinaya* (II. 180). A Śākya Kṣatriya, listing the duties of a layman, declares: "It is necessary to give orders to till the land and irrigate it. While irrigating, the level of the water should be the same everywhere . . . When the crops are ripe, it is necessary to give the order to harvest them and to winnow the chaff from the grain.[291]

In Buddhaghoṣa's commentary on the *Aṅguttara-Nikāya* it is mentioned that *kassaka-purisas* and even land-measurers worked on the fields belonging to Kṣatriyas.[292] We can cite a story from

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a Buddhist text about young Kṣatriyas who took ploughs and marched at the head of the festival marking the beginning of ploughing.[293]

Unlike the monarchies, where, besides a considerable stock of crown land, there were private holdings of Brāhmaṇas,[294] in the *gaṇas* land belonged primarily to the Kṣatriyas, which made them more independent and served as the basis of their power.

Class division and property inequality existed in non-monarchical formations. The *Jātakas* often mention rich Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas and poor people. Moreover, there was inequality of position among the individual members within a *varṇa*. For example, the *Mahāvastu* (III. 179) provides a description of the mode of travelling of the Śākya Kṣatriyas when they left their homes to join the Buddhist community: some on elephants, others in chariots, and still others, on horses, depending on their fortunes (riches—*svakasvakehi vibhavehi*).

The same source (III. 112-113) describes a meeting between the Buddha and the Śākyas living in Kapilavastu. Having listed the members of various sections of society from officials, military chiefs and Brāhmaṇas down to craftsmen, the writer says in conclusion that they belonged to the higher, middle and lower groups (*ete cānye ca uccāvacā janatā hinotkṛṣṭamadhyamā*). According to the Jātaka (I. 504), in the first (higher) part of the city there were 7,000 houses with gold towers, in the middle part—14,000 houses with silver towers, and in the lower part—21,000 houses with copper towers.[295] These figures are, of course, quite debatable but they do provide evidence of property stratification in the republics. It can be supposed, however, that inclusion into one of the three groups was determined not only by the individual's property status but also by his *varṇa* affiliation.

Though the data on the class structure in the developed *gaṇas* may be scarce, they make it possible to establish the existence of two basic categories—free men and slaves. The commentary by Patañjali (II. 269) on one of Pāṇini's *Sūtras* (IV. 168) shows that the latter were not full members of the communities and were completely separated from the rest of the population and, of course, first and foremost, from the ruling class, the Kṣatriyas. In the introduction to the *Bhaddasala-Jātaka* it is said that King Pasenadi's son by a bondwoman's daughter was not received by the Kṣatriyas with due honours because of his low origins.[296]

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The story cited before of the clash between the Śākyas and the Koliyas over irrigation water helps to form an idea of the extent of the employment of slave labour.[297] According to the *Kuṇāla-Jātaka*, the dispute was set off by the slaves engaged in irrigation work. Other sources (including the *Mahāvastu* and the *Vinaya*) also suggest that slaves were used in agriculture and housekeeping.[298] The evidence of the *Jātakas* about the bond-women who worked in the *santhāgāra*, a special assembly hall, indicates the existence of state-owned slaves (who were evidently the property of the *gaṇa*).[299]

Evidence regarding the class organisation in the republics is rather scarce, but still it is possible to trace the existence of the four-*varṇa* division in them. The highest privileged group of citizens enjoying full rights were the Kṣatriyas. Their influence was so great and the membership of this *varṇa*, distinct from the rest of the population, was so decisive that many sources (both Brāhmaṇic and Buddhist) describe some *saṅghas* and *gaṇas* as Kṣatriyan. The caste principle in the oligarchical republics was evidently decisive.[300] A poor Kṣatriya apparently enjoyed a higher status than a rich Vaiśya.

As has been mentioned earlier, a special status in the *saṅghas* belonged to the Kṣatriyas bearing the title of *rāja*, which they received after a consecration rite. The Licchavis had a special pond for performing this rite.[301] The greatest influence in the republics, primarily those ruled by an aristocracy, was enjoyed by "chiefs", who, judging by Buddhaghoṣa's data; were *Kṣatriya-rājas*.[302] Their leading role is also mentioned in the *Arthaśāstra*, in which it is said that the right to condemn or reject (possibly, banish) belonged exclusively to those bearing the title of *rāja*.[303]

Besides the division into *varṇas*, there existed in the *gaṇas* a broader division into internal (*antara*, *abhyantara*) and external citizens. In connection with the arrival of the Buddha in Vaiśālī, the *Mahāvastu* (I. 271) mentions that he was met by the people of the capital proper (*abhyantarā vaiśālakā*) and also by those of the suburbs (*bāhira vaiśālakā*). Despite the scarcity of data, there is reason to believe that the position of these groups was different and that the "residents of Vaiśālī proper" enjoyed a privileged status.

K.P. Jayaswal[304] and V.S. Agrawala[305] came to the conclusion

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on the emergence of the idea of citizenship in some *gaṇas* and *saṅghas*.

On the other hand, many survivals of tribal relations can be traced in the social structure of the republican states. Such survivals can be seen in the preservation of *gotras* (clans). They existed, for example, among the Śākyas.[306] According to legend, the Buddha came from the *gotra* of Gotama (Gautama.) According to the "Cūlasaccaka-sūtta" of the *Majjhima-Nikāya* (I. 229), some Licchavis, after they came to the Buddha, told him not only their names but also the names of their *gotras* (*nāmagottam.*) As Buddhaghoṣa explains, the newcomers were the impoverished descendants of old clans. Sometimes the name of a *gotra*, apparently the principal one, is used in the texts to denote the whole *gaṇa*. For instance, in the *Mahāparinibbāna-sūtta* (V. 19) the Mallas are styled Vasiṣṭhas.

On the whole, however, the role of *gotras* was becoming less important in the developed non-monarchical associations. In most sources it was already the *kula* (family) that was regarded as the main subdivision. Initially *kulas* were a part of the *gotras*, which, in their turn, constituted a *gaṇa*. Such a hierarchy of institutions is given in the *Mahābhārata* (XII.107.27) : "If a quarrel arises in families (*kuleṣu*) and the elders in them remain indifferent, the *gotra* is broken down and dissent sets in the *gaṇa*." The development of the state system was weakening the tribal relations and strengthening the family "in counterbalance to the clean" (F. Engels). Vīramitrodaya, a late commentator of the *Mitākṣarā*, quoted Kātyāyana as saying that a *gaṇa* was a collection of a *kulas*.[307] The *Arthaśāstra*, too, speaks of the division of a *saṅgha* into *kulas*, by which a big patriarchal family was evidently meant.

Basic Features of Political Organisation

A major characteristic of the political organisation of the *gaṇas* and the *saṅghas* was the absence of a hereditary ruler wielding autocratic power. Their head, who usually bore the title of *rāja*, *senāpati* or *pramukha*, was appointed (elected) by the *gaṇa* and could be dismissed under certain circumstances.[308] The *Cīvaravastu* mentions how, after the

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death of the *senāpati* of the Licchavis, Khaṇḍa—a former dignitary of the Magadhan king Bimbisāra and resident of Vaiśālī— was elected to this post. When he also died, the *gaṇa* assembled again to discuss a new candidate.[309] It was proposed that Khaṇḍa's son be appointed head of the *gaṇa*. This proposal was motivated, not by the custom of succession, but by the services performed by the deceased chief : "Since Khaṇḍa protected the *gaṇa*; let us appoint his son [to the office of *senāpati*]" (*khaṇḍena . . . gaṇaḥ paripālitaḥ tasyaiva putram sthāpayāma iti*).

After a discussion,[310] it was decided to appoint to the post Sinha, khaṇḍa's youngest son, who earlier seemed to decline the offer in favour of his elder brother. However, the messengers from the *gaṇa* firmly declared : "The office of *senāpati* does not come by way of succession from your ancestors (*na yuṣmakaṃ kulakramagataṃ senāpatyaṃ*) and only that man will be a *senāpati* whom the *gaṇa* likes (*yo gaṇasyābhirucitaḥ sa senāpatirbhavati*)." Incidentally, the *Cīvaravāstu* evidence differs somewhat from the data of other sources, specifically the *Cūllavagga* (VII. I.4), in which it is said that when Bhaddiya, the head of the *Śākyas*, had decided to renounce lay life, he asked a friend to wait for seven days until he handed over the government of the country to his sons and brothers (*putte ca bhātare ca rajjaṃ niyādemi*). This pessage may be regarded as indicating the existence of some elements of hereditary succession.

It is noteworthy that in discussing the question of nominating the ruler, the *gaṇa* acted as an active force. According to the *Cīvaravastu*, it could decide this matter even in the absence of the candidate, whom it merely notified its decision. It is emphasised in the *Mahābhārata* that the need of the *gaṇa* was its servant,[311] who, according to Kauṭilya, was obliged to act in conformity with the interests and aspirations of other members of the association.[312] Evidently he possessed only executive power.

Legislative power belonged solely to the *gaṇa* as the supreme body (the term *gaṇa* was used to denote something more than an association with a special form of government.[313] According to the *Majjhima-Nikāya* (I.230-231), it was so powerful that any man could be punished, banished or put to death on its orders. The *Cīvaravastu* reports that state decrees were issued on behalf of the *gaṇa*, although the name of its head was mentioned (for

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example : "The *gaṇa* headed by Khaṇḍa orders the following [to be done] . . .")[314] Anyone who failed to comply with these decrees was subject to a fine or could be sentenced to death. The *Mahāvastu* (III.256) mentions that among the Śākyas a person failing to comply with the order forbidding people to tell Rāhula about his kinship with the Buddha was to be put to death. It is noteworthy that a high dignitary (*mallamahāmātra*), Roja by name feared the punishment of the *gaṇa* (Mahāvagga, VI. 36.1). Moreover, the head of the Licchavis Sinha was not allowed to give his daughter in marriage to the Magadha king, Bimbisāra, without the *gaṇa's* consent, for there was a statute (established by the *gaṇa*) forbidding women to marry men from another town.[315]

The *gaṇa* had jurisdiction over matters connected with the election of the ruler, relations with hostile states, the maintenance of order in the country and the legal affairs of citizens. The *gaṇa* appointed special officials to carry out its commissions. It is narrated in the *Mahāvastu* (I.254) that, when an epidemic spread across the territory of the Licchavis, they sent their representative, Tomara, to the Buddha with an invitation to come to Vaiśālī. The Buddha said that he was willing to comply with their request but asked them first to obtain the agreement of Bimbisāra, whose guest he was. Bimbisāra set forth certain conditions, but Tomara was able to accept them only after he had received the *gaṇa's* sanction. The available data thus show that the *gaṇa* was in charge of administrative, judiciary and, apparently, financial matters.

The question as to who enjoyed the real power in the republican organisations and was represented in their supreme body, whether it was the people or a small elite, is very important. The available sources suggest that in some states power belonged to a popular assembly and in others to a council composed of aristocrats. For example, the assembly was the supreme legislative body of the Licchavis, although a privileged position was also being acquired by the *Kṣatriya-rājas*, who had established a council of their own. With certain reservations, such a form of government can be described as transitional from democratic to aristocratic. As for the states in which the people's assemblies had largely lost their significance and which were in fact governed by a privileged section of the Kṣatriyas, they may

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at best be described as aristocratic republics.

The Licchavi assemblies were evidently attended by all citizens enjoying full rights. The *Cīvaravastu* testifies to the fact that the Brāhmaṇas and the Vaiśyas were members of the Vaiśālī gaṇa.[316] Having learnt about Mahānāma's wish to marry off his daughter, the *gaṇa* decided to look at the bride, and its members gathered for that purpose. Mahānāma addressed them with the words: "Oh, honourable Brāhmaṇas and householders, my daughter is in my garden!"

The same text mentions that when Khaṇḍa fled from Bimbisāra and settled down to live with the Licchavis, the residents of the capital invited him to attend a *gaṇa* assembly.[317] The terms denoting the *gaṇa* and the inhabitants of Vaiśālī—Licchavis—are used in the text several times as interchangeable. The same interchangeability of terms is found in the account of the story of Gopa, who, having learnt that his younger brother had been appointed *senāpati*, came to the *gaṇa* and laid his claim to that office in front of the citizens of Vaiśālī. Tomara, who had been mentioned earlier, also acted on behalf of the Licchavi *gaṇa* or on behalf of the citizens of Vaiśālī, the Licchavis (the two expressions are used in the text as synonyms).

In the *Digha-Nikāya* (XVI. I.4), where the conditions of the invincibility of the *gaṇa* of the Licchavis are listed, the following words were addressed by the Buddha to his disciple Ānanda: "So long as the Vajjis (i.e. the Licchavis) regularly (*abhiṅhā*) call together full and large (*bahulā*) assemblies (*sannipāta*), they will have prosperity (*vuddhi*) and not desolation (*parihāni*); so long as they come together as one man (*samaggā sannipatissanti*), act unanimously (*samaggā vuṭṭhahisanti*) and settle their affairs unanimously (*samaggā vajjikaraṇīyani karissanti*), they will have prosperity and not desolation." Buddhaghoṣa clarified the meaning of some of the terms. Explaining the meaning of *samaggā sannipatissanti*, he said that "all gathered together on hearing the sound of the drum".

In the *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī* there is the following interpretation of the words *abhiṅhā* and *bahulā*: "They assembled three times day after day and in between such [assemblies] are called regular; yesterday they assembled to discuss some matter and the previous day they had assembled and today again they have assembled and [gatherings] do not cease—[such] assemblies are large". "And

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if they do not constantly assemble, and go to different districts, and fail to obey orders". Buddhaghoṣa writes, "then they do not know that the boundaries of villages and towns have been violated and that brigands have captured such and such a locality".

Among the seven conditions of invincibility of the Licchavis "respect and esteem for elders" (*mahallaka*) is mentioned. Although in the *Dīgha-Nikāya* it is expressed only as desirable, it can be assumed to reflect the role of the council of elders in the early period of the history of the republics, whose political structure had retained some features of the tribal organisation.

It is also noteworthy that in other texts the term *mahallaka* occurs very rarely in connection with the political organisation of the *saṅghas*, and that it is mostly applied to *rājas*. It is not impossible that in the course of time the council, which originally included representatives of the oldest clans, became more and more aristocratic. It seems to us that this process, typical of the period of the shaping of the state, is reflected in Buddhagoṣa's commentary. While in the *Dīgha-Nikāya* mention is made merely of elders, in the *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī* they are understood to be elder *rājas*, *mahallakarājānas*, who, drawing on their knowledge of ancient traditions, point out the course (*upāya*) of action.[318] It should be kept in mind that Buddhaghoṣa was generally inclined to exaggerate somewhat the increasingly aristocratic character of the political structure of the republic.

The *gaṇa* assemblies of the Śākyas could also be attended by all free citizens enjoying full rights.[319] In the Tibetan *Dulva*, for example, the procedure for the discussion of some problems by the *gaṇa* is described. When the king of Kośala besieged Kapilavastu and demanded that the city should surrender, the Śākyas gathered together to decide whether or not they should open the gate to the enemy troops. Opinion was divided : some urged surrender, others were against it. Finally, it was decided to take a ballot to abide by the opinion of the majority.[320] It is noteworthy that matters of prime importance were discussed. Nevertheless, it seems that only *Kṣatriya-rājas* were elected to the leading posts.[321] It was they who sat on the *santhāgāra*.[322]

In the *Mahāvastu* (I.354) there is a story about a noble lady, a former resident of Kapilavastu, who sent her sons there, since, as she said, the chiefs of the Śākyas (*śakya-mahāttarakā*) were

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her relatives (*jñātikā*). In the city the youths were met by the citizens and taken to the *santhāgāra*, where, according to the text, the *Kṣatriya-rājas* were holding a meeting; they were very glad to see the noble youths and not people of low descent (*na prākṛtena puruṣena*).

In the introduction to the *Vessantara-Jātaka* (No. 547), an assembly of the *rājas* of the Śākyas, which discussed the question of how the Buddha should be met, is described. In the *Bhaddasala-Jātaka* (No. 465) the story of Prince Viddudabha is told and the causes of his campaign against the Śākyas are given. When Pasenadi, the king of Kośala, addressed the Śākyas, asking them to give him a Kapilavastu maiden in marriage, they (as seen from the context, the *rajas*) came together in the *santhāgāra* for a discussion.

In explaining the term *santhāgāra*, Buddhaghoṣa noted that the *rājas* who sat on it discussed the *artha*.[323] This word evidently denotes practical questions concerning domestic affairs and administration. The commentator specially explains the nature of the problems (*kicca*) decided by the Śākyan *santhāgāra* : he calls them *gharāvāsa*, that is, matters connected with husbandry (fixing the most suitable time for tilling fields, sowing, etc.).[324]

The sources speak of the assemblies of *rājas* not only in the *gaṇa* of the Śākyas but in other *gaṇas* as well; for instance, in the *gaṇa* of the Mallas. According to Buddhaghoṣa (II.604-605), their *rājas* (*malla-rājānas*) decorated the *santhāgāra* to lay out the Buddha's body there. The same commentator explains *santhāgāra* as a hall where representatives of the Kṣatriya families (*rāja-kula*) discussed questions concerning the administration of the country.[325]

The Pāli Canon provides some details which help to reconstruct the manner in which the assemblies were held. Those attending—according to available data, they were some 500 in number—took the "eastern" or the "western" seats.[326] This figure, which occurs in many sources, seems to be merely traditional and need not reflect the real number. It probably did not include all the *rājas* but only a small fraction of them, the most aristocratic and influential.[327] It is not improbable that within the aristocratic council there existed an exclusive committee, a kind of "privy council", which held most of the power in its hands. The references in Jaina texts to a "council of nine"

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may suggest this.[328]

The above details suggest a distinction between an assembly of the *gaṇa* (which could evidently be attended by all citizens enjoying full rights) and an assembly of the *Kṣatriya-rājas*, who constituted the aristocratic council. Unfortunately, we lack the necessary evidence for comparing the two. It is reasonable to assume that matters were initially discussed in the *gaṇa*, whereas the final decision rested with the council of the *rājas*.

The scarcity and fragmentary nature of the data make it impossible to get a full picture of the system of administration in the republics, but there is no doubt that there existed a staff of officials. For example, we know that the Licchavis and the Mallas had *mahāmātras* and *amātyas*. The former had to obey the *gaṇa* in spite of their high position.[329] The latter group of officials, whom Buddhaghoṣa (II.673) calls *niyutta amaccā*, i.e. "appointed amātyas", occupied lower rungs in the hierarchy. The *Jātakas* (I.316) contain evidence of a large group of officials who were in charge of the treasury and stores of goods (*bhāṇḍāgārika*).

Thanks to Buddhaghoṣa's commentary, we have at our disposal some data relating to the judicial procedure among the Licchavis. The accused was first brought before special officials (*vinicchayamahāmāttas*), who were to decide whether he was guilty or not. If found guilty, his case was submitted to officials of a higher rank, called *vohārikas*. If they, too, found him guilty, the *suttadhāras* were requested to try the case. The same procedure was also followed at higher levels—the *aṭṭha-kulaka* (apparently the council of eight), the *senāpati*, the *uparāja* and the *rāja*. If the *rāja* (who seems to have been the head of the *gaṇa*) also found the accused guilty, the latter was punished in accordance with the *paveṇi-poṭṭhaka*, "the book of traditions" (that is, the book of precedents).[330] It is hard to say how accurate the commentator's description is, but its general democratism is in tune with the structure of the republic's political organisation. It will be recalled that it was there that the important role of the popular assembly had been preserved and democratic practices had survived. Buddhaghoṣa's reference to "the book of traditions" indicates a well-developed system of judicial procedure and administration in general.

The character of the political organisation of the *gaṇas* and

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saṅghas, including those in which fairly wide sections of the free population took part in the political life, made those formations stronger and produced an impression of internal harmony and equality on the people of that time. However, the republican formations were class societies, and sources indicate that they were far from being free from internal antagonisms. In the *Arthaśāstra* (*XI*), mention is made of conflicts in the *saṅghas* between "chiefs" (that is, Kṣatriyas) and members of other *varṇas*. According to the *Mahābhārata* (XI. 107.29) the antagonisms within the *gaṇas* constituted "an enemy even more dangerous than an attack from outside".

The interrelations that had emerged between various sections of society in the republics were different from those in the monarchies. Although the focus of the internal conflicts was, different, it did not make them any less acute. Even in controversy the struggle between different social groups sometimes reached a high degree of intensity. In the *Vinaya*, for example, an open mutiny is described, in which slaves assaulted the wives of the free Śākyas (*sakiyadāsakā avaruddhā honti*.[331]

The existence of hostile groupings is suggested by the evidence of the epics and of Pāṇini. Kāśikā (VIII. 1.15) explained the terms *dvandva* and *vuytkramaṇa*, which occur in Pāṇini, as the division of peoples into two parties which acted separately.[332] Patañjali (IV. 2.104.II) points to the parties of *Vāsudeva* and *Akrūra*. In the *Mahābhārata* there is a reference to the head of a *saṅgha*, Kṛṣṇa, who deplores the attacks on him from the rival parties : "I cannot give preference to either of them, just as the mother of two sons playing dice cannot wish one of them to win or the other to lose" (XII. 81).

The *gaṇas* (republics) survived up to the Gupta period. They played a major part in the history of ancient India, particularly at the time of the struggle for hegemony in north India in the 5th-4th centuries B.C. Even after they had been conquered by monarchies, they did not lose their independence completely and, as we have seen, retained the status of semi-autonomous units within the Mauryan state, After the fall of the empire, some of them succeeded in regaining their former independence. The internal development of the political and social organisation of the *gaṇas* and *saṅghas* was an integral part of the evolution of ancient Indian society.

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Notes and References

1. For more details, see D.C. Sircar, *Studies in the Geography...*, pp.1-16.
2. T.B. Mukherjee, *Inter-State Relations in Ancient India*, Meerut, 1967.
3. U.N. Ghoshal, *A History of Indian Political Ideas*; Kangle, III, ch. XI.
4. Dhauli version, V MRE.
5. I MiRE.
6. Possession. Sometimes translated as sphere of influence. (D.C. Sircar, *Studies in the Geography ...*, p. 5; by the same author, *Cosmography and Geography in Early Indian Literature*, Calcutta, 1967).
7. *Sam.*, II. 309; *DPPN*, vol. I, p. 219.
8. B Ch. Law, 'Historical and Geographical Aspects of the Aśokan Inscriptions', *JIH*, vol. 41, pt II, 1963, p. 345. Cf., for instance, the geographical ideas of Pāṇini and Patañjali (V.S. Agrawala, *India as Known to Pāṇini*; B.N. Puri, *India in the Time of Patañjali*.).
9. J. Bloch, *Les inscriptions d'Aśoka*, p. 103.
10. Most translators rendered these words as "people who live along the western frontiers" (cf., for example, A. Woolner, *ATG*, II, p. 62; R. Basak, *Aśokan Inscriptions*, p. 27). J. Bloch (p. 103) conveyed the main meaning correctly : "et autres occidentaux".
11. In *Purāṇas* "aparanta" was understood either as certain areas in West India (Surāṣṭra, the district of Narmada) or as the country of this name (*Purāṇa Index*, I, pt I, p. 72; see K.P. Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*, pp. 131-132). In the other sources, *aparānta* usually meant "regions of West India"; sometimes, like in the *Purāṇas*, this term was applied to a certain area in the west of India (B.Ch. Law, *India as Described ...*, pp. 16-18, 66-68; *DPPN*, vol. I, pp.117-118; B.Ch. Law, *Indological Studies*, pp. 42-43).
12. In XIII MRE the Yonas, the Kambojas, the Bhojas and the Pitinikas are referred to as "dwelling within the empire" (lit. "here", *hida*). E. Rapson's interpretation, "western neighbours", is unacceptable (*CHI*, I, pp. 514-515).
13. It is noteworthy that the Indian sources included the Yonas (Yavanas), the Kambojas and the inhabitants of *aparānta* in the *Uttarāpatha* (*Purāṇa Index* I, p. 72; B.Ch. Law, *India* as Described..., pp. 66-68). According to B.M. Barua, by *Uttarāpatha* Buddhist authors meant western and north-western areas rather than northern ones (B.M. Barua, *Aśoka...*, p. 81. See also *DPPN*, vol. I, p. 363).
14. K.P. Jayaswal believes that the term "aparātā" in the Vth Major Rock Edict refers not to all the peoples listed but only to the last two (*riṣṭika-paitenika*). The interpretation we suggest helps overcome the difficulty encountered by K.P. Jayaswal in his interpretation of the texts (K.P. Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*, pp. 133-134).
15. *Mah.*, XII. 5; *Dīp.*, VIII. 9; *Sam.* I.67; E. Lamatte, *Histoire...*, pp. 324-328; E. Frauwallner, *The Earliest Vinaya...*, pp. 15-23.
16. Patañjali calls the Graeco-Bactrians the Yavanas; besides, he also mentioned Yavanas' settlements (B.N. Puri, *India in the Time of Patañjali*, pp. 29, 62; *DPPN*, vol. II, p. 699.
17. For instance, in Tamil sources and in the Ceylonese chronicle *Cūlavaṃsa*

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(72. 264). O. Stein believes that the term *Yona* (*Yavana*) was used to denote the population of western areas outside India (O. Stein, 'Yavanas in Early Indian Inscriptions' *IC*, vol. I, 1935, pp. 343-358).

18. For instance Bh. Ghosh, 'Did Not Yavana Denote Persian Even before the Second Century A.D.? *IC*, vol. I, 1935, pp. 519-521. For criticism of this vew, see D.C. Sircar, 'Yavana and Pārasīka', *JIH*, vol. 14, 1935, pp. 34-38.
19. E. Senart, *Les inscriptions de Piyadasi*, t. II, p. 273.
20. A. Foucher, *La vieille route dc l'Inde de Bactres a Taxila*, t. II, Paris, 1947, p. 271.
21. D. Bhandarkar, *Carmichael Lectures*, Calcutta, 1921, pp. 23-32; K.P. Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*, pp. 120-121; B.M. Barua, *Aśoka...*, pp. 96-97; V.S. Agrawala, *India as Known to Pāṇini*, pp. 456-466. One of the more recent attempts at substantiating this view was made by A. Narain (*The Indo-Greeks*, pp. 165-170).
22. P.H.L. Eggermont, *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, Leiden, 1961, Nos. 3-4 (review of A. Narain's work); see also Yu. V. Gankovsky, *Narody Pakistana* (*Osnovniye etapy etnicheskoy istorii*) [*The Peoples of Pakistan* (*Basic Stages of Ethnic History*], Moscow, 1964, p. 71.
23. V.S. Agrawala, *India as Known to Pāṇini*, pp. 311-312.
24. It is noteworthy that in Darius I's inscription the Ionians of Asia Minor are designated by the term *yauna*, which was applied to all Greeks. In one of the copies of the *Mahābhārata* (XII. 200. 40), instead of the usual form *yavana* there occurs *yauna*, which may be associated with the ancient designation of the Ionians (Greeks) in the Achaemenid epoch (see A. Narain, *The Indo-Greeks*, p. 169; B.M. Barua, *Aśoka...*, p. 93).
25. Data of classical authors can also be cited confirming the existence of Greek settlements in Central Asia before Alexander's campaign (Strabo, XI. 11.4; XIV, 1.5; Curtius Rufus, VII. 5.28-35). Herodotus (IV. 204; VI. 9) wrote about the migration to Bactria of inhabitants from the western regions of the Achaemenid empire.
26. D. Bhandarkar, *Carmichael Lectures*, p. 21; A. Narain, *The Indo-Greeks*, p. 3. For the discovery of Greek coins in Afghanistan, see R. Curiel, D. Schlumberger, *Trésore monétaires d'Afghanistan*, Paris, 1953.
27. See K. Fischer, 'Zur Lage von Kandahar Landverbindungen zwischen Iran und Indien', *Bonner Jahrbücher*, Bd 167, 1967, pp. 129-232.
28. *Mah.*, XXIX. 34.
29. A. Cunningham, *Ancient Geography...*, p. 18; S. Lévi, 'Alexandre et Alexandrie dans les documents indiens,' in *Mémorial Sylvain Lévi*, Paris, 1937, pp. 413-423; by the same author, '*La Grece L'Inde d'aprés les documents indiens*', *ibid.*, pp. 187-203.
30. See the section written by E. Benveniste in the publication of the Kandahar bilingual.
31. J. Bloch, *Les inscriptions d'Aśoka* p. 103. In the *Majjhima-Nikāya* (II. 149), Kamboja and Yona are mentioned together as adjacent countries (*paccantimesu janapadesu*); for more details on the data of the Jaina and Buddhist sources, see B. Ch. Law, *India*. . as Described, pp. 66-68.

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32. See B. Ch. Law, *Indological Studies*, pp. 6-8.
33. E., Benveniste, *Les données iraniennes*, in D. Schluberger, L. Robert, A. Dupont-Sommer, E. Beuveniste, une bilingue grèco-araméenne d' Aśoka, TA. 1958, v. 254, pp. 44-45.
34. Yāska lived evidently not later than the 4th cent. B.C. and he probably was a contemporary or even a teacher of Pāṇini.
35. *śavatir gātikarmā kambojeṣv eva bhāṣyate.* The same passage is quoted by Patañjali in the *Mahābhāṣya.*
36. Long before the discovery of the Kandahar bilingual G. Grierson advanced a supposition, on the basis of Yāska's data, that the Kambojas spoke either Sanskrit with an admixture of Iranian words, or a language partially Indo-Aryan and partially Iranian (*JRAS*, 1911, pp. 801-802). See also E.A. Grantovsky, 'Plemennoye obyedineniye Paśu-Parśava u Pāṇini [The Tribal Association Parśu-Parśava in Pāṇini], in *Istoriya i kultura drevney Indii* [*History and Culture of Ancient India*], pp. 72-73.
37. E. Benveniste, *Les données iraniennes*, p. 44.
38. *J.*, VI.208.
39. Noteworthy in this connection is the fact that some Indian sources regard the Kambojas as a people that has abandoned righteous living, traditions and ideas (*J.*, VI.208, 210), see *DPPN*, vol. I, p. 526; B.M. Barua, *Aśoka...*, p. 100 (the data of the Epics). H. Raychaudhuri cites a reference from the *Mahābhārata* (VII.4.5) in which the Kambojas are associated with the town of Rājapura. (*Political History*, p. 7.) Hiuan Tsang mentioned the inhabitants from Lampa to Rājapura who did not belong to India proper and who had "savage customs" (T, Watters, vol. I, p. 284).

    Buddhaghoṣa treated the Kambojas (along with the Yonas and the other neighbouring peoples of Uttarāpatha) as *Pārasīkavaṇṇā*, i.e. as Persians or some other people who have undergone a Persian influence (B.M. Barua, *Aśoka...*, p. 100). The word *Pārasīka* at the time was used to designate the Persians. They are mentioned in the *Mahābhārata*, and other texts (D.C. Sircar, *Studies in the Geography...*, p. 38). It is possible that the tradition about peculiar non-Indian (Iranian) customs and ways of the Kambojas had survived till Buddhaghoṣa's time.
40. V. Smith, *The Early History...*, p. 184.
41. *JA*, 1932, p. 54.
42. V.S. Agrawala, *India as Known to Pāṇini*, p. 37; *Age of the Nandas and Mauryas*, p. 222.
43. H. Raychaudhuri, *Political History...*, p. 367.
44. *CII*, I, p. XXXVIII.
45. J. Bloch, *Les inscriptions d'Aśoka*, p. 103.
46. *Sāsanavaṃsa*, p. 49.
47. E.A. Grantovsky, 'Plemennoye obyedineniye...', *loc. cit.*, p. 74.
48. *Ibid.* In the *Mahābhārata* Kambojas are described as excellent equestrians (K.P. Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*, p. 140). According to the *Arthaśāstra* (II.47), Kamboja was renowned for its horses. The same evidence is contained in the *Harṣacarita* (D.D. Kanjilal, 'Ancient Indian Geography

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in Bāṇabhaṭṭa', *IHQ*, vol. 34, No. 2, 1958, pp. 123-138) and in Buddhaghoṣa, who described Kamboja as a country famous for its horses (*assānam āyatanam*). (*Sumaṅgalavilāsinī*, I, 124). The *Jātakas* give a detailed description of the methods of capturing horses practised there (V.445-446). References to the Kambojas as horse-traders have been also preserved in Ceylonese inscriptions (*History of Ceylon*, vol. I, p. 28; see also G.M. Bongard-Levin, "Zapadnaya tsaritsa" i kambodzhiytsy drevnego Tseilona' [' "Western Queen" and the Kambojas of Ancient Ceylon'], [*Drevniy Vostok*] *Ancient Orient*, Moscow, 1975. On the basis 'of the evidence of sources about Kamboja's fame for its equestrians and horses, K.P. Jayaswal proposed to identify the Kambojas with the Aśvakas Skr. *aśva* "horse"), who, according to Arrian, lived in the vicinity of Kabul (K.P. Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*, p. 140).

49. *Arth.* II.47; see G. Bongard-Levin, *Kvykhodu...*, pp. 252-253. Interesting data on the location of Kamboja are found in the mediaeval text *Śaktisaṅgama Tantra*. Its author places Kamboja between the country of the Pañchālas (Western Punjab) and the south-western frontier of the country of the Mlecchas, which, according to the text, was to be understood as Makran (Vakrānta) and Khorasan (Khurāśana). In the east, Kamboja bordered on the areas of Western Punjab, and in the south-east, on the region of Southern Afganistan. The source places Kamboja to the south of the country of Bāhlīka, which occupied the territory of Northern Afghanistan (D.C. Sircar, 'Pāñchāla, Kamboja, Bāhlīka and Pāṇḍu', *Bhāratī*, Bulletin of the College of Indology, Central Asian Number, vols. 10-11, 1966-1968, pp. 3-6). The Punjab castes, known under the name of *Kamboh*, have preserved a legend that they came to the Punjab from the region of Gazni near Kambay (K.P. Jayaswal, 'Places and Peoples in Aśoka's Inscriptions', *Indian Antiquary*, vol. 62, 1933, p. 130).
50. E.A. Grantovsky, 'Plemennoye obyedineniye..., *loc. cit.*, p. 76.
51. Such are, for example, the data of the epics (H. Raychaudhuri, *Political History...*, p. 148-150). Kamboja is mentioned together with Gandhāra in the list of 16 "great countries"—*Mahājanapadas* (*Aṅg,-N.*, I.213; IV.252.256; see *DPPN*, vol. I, pp. 526-527).
52. *Sindhor-ubhayataḥ pārśve*; *Rāmāyaṇa*, VIII, 113, quoted from H. Raychaudhuri, *Political History. . .*, p. 69; D.C. Sircar, *Cosmography. . .*, p. 73; B.Ch. Law, *Some Kṣatriya Tribes. . .*, pp. 265-269.
53. B.Ch. Law, *Indological Studies*, 1, p. 11.
54. Ptolemy, I.44 (L. Renou, *La Geographie de Ptolemée l'Inde*, VII, 1-4, Paris, 1925, p. 21).
55. For more details, see A. Cunningham, *Ancient Geography...*, p. 55.
56. P.H.L. Eggermont, *Alexander's Campaign in Gandhāra*, and Ptolemy's List of Indo-Scythian Towns', "Orientalia Lovaniensia Periodica, I, Renve", 1970, p. 122.
57. W.B. Henning, 'The Aramaic Inscription of Aśoka Found in Lampaka', *BSO(A)S*, vol. 13, No. I, 1949, pp. 80-88.
58. Different versions give different names : Nabhaka Nabhitina, Nabhapaṃtiṣu, Nabhaka Nābhapaṃtiṣu.

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59. Vallée-Poussin, *L'Inde aux temps des Mauryas*, p. 66; D. Bhandarkar, *Aśoka* p. 29; R. Mookerji, *Aśoka*, p. 168; H. Raychaudhuri, *Political History...*, p. 309.
60. In Pāṇini there occurs the name of Urṇa-Nābha, Nabhāke (V.S. Agrawala, *India as Known to Pāṇini*, p. 499). A Stein related Aorn to Urṇa (modern Uṇa) (A. Stein, 'Alexander's Campaign on the India's North-Western Frontier', *Journal of the Central Asian Society*, vol. 18, No. 2, 1930, p. 169), which makes it possible to place Urṇa-Nābha (Nābha) near Aorn, situated, according to some sources, on the territory of Gandhāra (A. Cunningham, *Ancient Geography...*, p. 67). The Urṇas are sometimes grouped with people of Uttarāpatha together with the Aparāntas, the Lampākas and the Vāhlīkas. See B.M. Barua, *Aśoka...*, p. 102.
61. T. Watters, vol. I, pp. 158-170. Hiuan Tsang saw in Kashmir a number of *stūpas* built, according to tradition, by Aśoka. See E. Lamotte, *Histoire...*, pp. 279-280.
62. According to the inscription, the pillar was erected on the spot where the Buddha was born (Rummindei is evidently the present-day name of the ancient village of Lumbinī). Hiuan Tsang visited Lumbinī and saw the pillar built by Aśoka (T. Watters, vol. II, p. 14). See also E. Lamotte, *Histoire...*, pp. 345-346).
63. At first, this pillar evidently stood six miles from Kapilavastu, where there was a *stūpa* erected in memory of the Buddha Konakamana (Kanakamuni). Hiuan Tsang saw it there (T. Watters, vol. II. pp. 6-7).
64. *History of Buddhism*, p. 51. Many authors believe that the reference in the *Divyāvadāna* (p. 372) to the suppression of the tribes of Khaśa by Prince Aśoka also testify to the fact that some regions of Nepal were included in the Mauryan empire (E. Lamotte, *Histoire...*, p. 280; *Age of the Nandas and Mauryas*, p. 221). However, the placing of Khaśa in Nepal can hardly be regarded as a settled issue. The *Divyāvadāna* tells of Aśoka's march on Taxila and his invasion of the kingdom of Svaśa (Khaśa); the correctness of the corrections of the text published by Cowell and Neil, which were proposed by E. Burnouf has been borne out by the Chinese version—*K'iacha* (J. Przyluski, *La Légende...*, p. 233). This provides justification for placing Khaśa not in Nepal but near Taxila. Khaśa is mentioned, in particular, by Kalhana in his chronicle of the history of Kashmir. The *Purāṇas* place Khaśa in the region of the Himalayas (see D.C. Sircar, *Cosmography...*, p. 83).
65. For more details, see H.C. Seth, 'Central Asiatic Provinces of the Mauryan Empire', *IHQ*, vol. 13, 1937, pp. 400-402; by the same author, 'The Kingdom of Khotan under the Mauryas', *IHQ*, vol. 15, 1939, pp. 389-402; J. Brough, 'Legends of Khotan and Nepal" *BSO(A)S*, vol. 12, 1948, pp. 333-339; H. Bailey, *Khotanese Buddhist Texts*, vol. IV, London, 1951, Nos 13-14.
66. For more details see G.M. Bongard-Levin, 'Epigrafichesky dokument Mauryan iz Bengala' ['An Epigraphic Document of Mauryas from Bengal'], *Sovetskoye vostokovedeniye* [*Soviet Orientology*], No. 3, 1958, pp. 109-113; by the same author, 'Prakritskaya nadpis na brakhmi iz Bengala, ['A

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Prakrit Inscription in Brāhmī from Bengal'], *Wissenschaftliche. Zeitschrift der Martin-Luther Universitat*, Bd IX 6, pp. 1083-1092; by the same auther, 'Epigraphic Document of the Mauryas from Bengal', *JASL*, vol. 24, No. 2, 1958, pp. 79-84.

67. D.C. Sircar dates it to the 3rd century B.C. (*SI*, pp. 79-80). According to M.A. Mehendale, the Brāhmī of the inscription belongs to Aśoka's time (M.A. Mehendale, *Historical Grammar of Inscriptional Prakrits* Poona, 1948, p. 184). R. Thapar (*Aśoka...*, p. 233) believes this inscription to be pre-Aśokan.
68. D.R. Bhandarkar, 'Mauryan Brāhmī Inscription of Mahāsthān', *EI*, vol. 21. pp. 85-91; by the same author, 'Important Fragmentary Inscription Found at Mahāsthān *Ind. Ant.*, vol. 62. 1933, pp. 177-178; by the same auther, 'Note on a Mauryan Inscription from Mahāsthān (the Ancient Paunḍravardhana)'. *JPrASB*, New Series, vol. 28, No. 1, 1932, pp. 123-126; B.M. Barua, 'The Old Brāhmī Inscription from Mahāsthān', *IHQ*, vol. 10, 1934, pp. 57-66; C.C. Das Gupta, 'Paleographical Notes on the Mauryan Brāhmī Inscription of Mahāsthān', *IC*, July 1936, pp. 206-207.
69. D. Bhandarkar, 'note on a Mauryan inscription...,' *loc. cit.*
70. G. Bühler, 'The Sohgaura Copper Plate', *Ind. Ant.*, vol. 25, 1896, pp. 261-266; J.F. Fleet, 'The Inscription of the Sohgaura Plate', *JRAS*, 1907, pp. 509-532; B.M. Barua, 'The Sohgaura, Copper Plate Inscription', *ABORI*, vol. 11, pt I, 1930, pp. 32-48.
71. B.C. Law, 'The Puṇḍras of Ancient Bengal', *JIH*, vol. 12, 1933, pp.349-353; For the name of Bengal, see D.C. Sircar, *Studies in the Geography...*, pp. 123-133. The town of Puṇḍranagara is mentioned in the *Divyāvadāna*, p. 427, which tells of the relations between Aśoka and the adepts of the sect of Ājīvikas.
72. *Mah.* XI. 38. A chronicle (XIX. 6) even tells how Aśoka reached to port of Tāmralipti from his capital in one week by a special road which ran through the woods of Vindhya. Tāmralipti was one of the busiest ports of India, through which trade was carried on mostly with Ceylon and South-East Asia. Excavations revealed evidence relating to the Mauryan epoch (T.N. Ramachandra, 'Tāmraliptī (Tamluk)', *Artibus Asiae*, vol. 14, 1951, pp. 226-240. Y.D. Sharma, 'Exploration of the Historical Sites', *AI*, vol. 9, 1953, pp. 154-155. In some Jaina sources, Tāmralipti is considered to be the capital of the country of Vaṅga (South Bengal), this can be compared with the classical authors' references to the main town of the Gangaridai at the mouth of the Ganges (D.C. Sircar, *Cosmography...*, p. 99, note 22).
73. Plutarch (LXII) reports that the rulers of the Gangaridai and the Prasii had succeeded to the throne by Candragupta.
74. The Greek Prasioi (Lat. Prasii) is a rendering of the Skr. *prācyas*—inhabitants of East India. Prācya was one of the five main divisions of India (D.C. Sircar, *Studies in the Geography...*, p. 172).
75. For more details, see Suniti Kumar Chatterji, 'Gangaridai.' *Sutdies in Indian*

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Linguistics (Volume presented to Prof. M.B. Emeneau), Madras, 1966, pp. 70-74.

76. The Girnar version. In other versions : *pitenika, pitinika.*
77. *J.* Bloch, *Les Inscriptions d'Aśoka*, pp. 103-104.
78. *Ibid.*, pp. 130-131.
79. This is confirmed by the Hāthigumpha inscription of Khāravela, which refer to the struggle of the king of Kaliṅga against the joint forces of the Bhojakas and the Raṭhikas.
80. B.Ch. Law, *Indological Studies, I*, pp. 36-38; H. Raychaudhuri, *Political History...*, pp. 89-91; D.C. Sircar, *Studies...*, p. 34; by the same author, *Cosmography...*, p. 81.
81. B.M. Barua, *Aśoka...*, pp, 83-88; K.P. Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*, p. 135; T.N., Subramaniam, 'Petenikas of Aśoka's Rock Edict XIII,' *JRAS*, 1923, pp. 88-93.
82. D. Bhandarkar, *Aśoka*, p. 30; H. Raychaudhuri, *Political History...*, pp. 311-312.
83. For more details, see B.M. Barua, *Aśoka...*, pp. 89-91; B.Ch. Law, *India* as Described..., pp. 68-69.
84. *Purāṇa Index*, II, p. 360; on the evidence of the *Vayu-purāṇa* Al-Biruni located the Pulindas in South India. Palada is mentioned in Pāṇini (IV. 2.142)—Dākṣina pālada, i.e. southern Paradas.
85. In the inscription he is called Yavanarāja, but his name seems to suggest that he was an Iranian (*Historical and Cultural Chronology of Gujarat*, General Editor M.R. Majmudar, Baroda, 1960, p. 32). The fact that the local ruler is described as Yavana is interesting in view of the fact that Buddhist tradition reports the dispatch to western regions (to the country of Aparāntaka) of a mission headed by Yanaka Dhammarakkhita (*Dīp.*, VIII. 1-13; *Mah.*, XII. 1-55; *Sam.*, 1.63-69). Evidently, these areas of India were inhabited by a considerable number of people of Greek origin. It is interesting that, according to some sources, Surāṣṭra was situated beyond the borders of Āryāvarta and was inhabited by a mixed (not purely Āryan) population. On visiting this country, a Brahman was to perform a special purificatory rite. This idea of regions of West India might have been due to the fact that there were more marriages between Indians and foreigners, particularly Greek and Iranians, there (P.V. Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra*, vol. II, pp. 13-16).
86. On a rock in Junāgarh, Aśoka's edicts, Rudradāman's inscription and inscription of Skandagupta of the Gupta dynasty were found. Thus, the history of Gujarat from the 3rd cent. B.C. to the 5th cent. A.D. was represented there.
87. R. Thapar, *Aśoka...*, p. 124.
88. H. Raychaudhuri, *Political History...*, p. 311.
89. *CII.*, I, p. XXXVIII; R. Thapar, *Aśoka...*, p. 236.
90. See V. Smith, 'Aśoka Notes', *Ind. Ant.*, vol. 47, 1918, pp. 48-49. B.M. Barua believes that Tāmraparṇi originally designated the fluvial area in the south of India (south of the country of Pāṇḍya) and later, perhaps in the Mauryan epoch, the name came to be applied to the north-western parts of Ceylon

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(B.M. Barua, *Aśoka*..., p. 115).

91. U.N. Ghoshal, *A History of Indian Political Ideas*, pp. 77-79: J.W. Spellman, *Political Theory of Ancient India*, Oxford, 1964, pp. 173-175.
92. *savve munisse pajā mamā.*
93. In all cases the king was to care for victims of calamities "like a father" (*Arth.*, IV. 3). In the IInd Special Edict : "like a father, so the king is to us; like he feels for himself, so he feels for us; like his children [are dear to him], so are we."
94. R. Thapar, *Aśoka*..., p. 95.
95. U.N. Ghoshal, *A History of Indian Political Ideas*, p. 293.
96. *Age of the Nandas and Mauryas*, p. 174.
97. See J. Bloch, *Les inscriptions d'Aśoka*, p. 171.
98. *Ibid.*, p. 103.
99. *vividhāyā hi sukhāyanāyā pulimahi pilājihi.*
100. R. Mookerji, *Aśoka*, p. 47; B.M. Barua, *Aśoka*..., p. 131.
101. V. Smith, *Aśoka*, p. 92.
102. Inscriptions mention the *abhiṣeka* of Aśoka, the ceremony of ascending the throne with the title of *rāja*. Many edicts count the regnal years from the moment of the coronation (*abhisitasa*, *abhisitena*, for example, I.V.VI. PE, XIII RE, etc.). Unfortunately, they contain no description of the ceremony itself; however, we can get an idea of it from indirect sources (see J.C. Heesterman, *The Ancient India Royal Consecration*, the Hague, 1957; J. Auboyer, *Le trone et son symbolisme dans l'Inde ancienne*, Paris, 1949).
103. See, for example, D. Bhandarkar, *Aśoka*, p. 90.
104. Strabo, XV.1.36.
105. Judging by Pāli documents, they were styled *Rāja Māgadho Seṇiyo Bimbisāro and Rāja Māgadho Ajatasattu Vedehiputto.*
106. J.W. Spellman, *Political Theory*..., p. 11.
107. R.S. Sharma, *Aspects of Political Ideas*..., pp. 96-97.
108. In the Allahabad inscription Samudragupta is called a god (*CII*, III, p. 8).
109. G.M. Bongard-Levin, G.F. Ilyin, *Drevnyaya Indiya* [*Ancient India*], p. 516.
110. B.M. Barua believed the title "Beloved of the Gods" to have been associated with the traditional Vedic coronation ceremony. It is significant that in VIII MjRE Aśoka calls ancient rulers not merely kings (*rājāno*) but in some versions also "Beloved of the Gods" (*devānaṃpiya*, *devānaṃpriya*; J. Bloch, *Les inscriptions d'Aśoka*, p. 111).
111. *Age of the Nandas and Mauryas*, p. 175.
112. R. Thapar, *Aśoka*..., p. 96.
113. See, for example, the report of Curtius Rufus (IX.8) on the election of rulers among the peoples of North-West India.
114. For more details, see B.Ch. Law, *India*...; J.C. Jain, *Life*...; G.M. Bongard-Levin, 'Nekotoriye osobennosti...', *loc. cit.*, p. 56.
115. F. Edgerton, 'Pañcadivyādhivāsa or Choosing a King by Divine Will', *JAOS*, vol. 33, 1913, pp. 158-166.

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116. This is the story of the giant lion that approached the sleeping Candragupta.
117. *History of Buddhism*, p. 30.
118. The III MjRE undoubtedly speaks about a political *pariṣad* (*parisā*), a council of king's dignitaries, and not about an assembly of doctors (Lassen), priests (Smith), teachers and ascetics (Bühler) (see A. Woolner, *ATG*, II, p. 109). Bloch gives no exact definition of the term *parisā*, supposing that the edict may deal with various forms of council (J. Bloch, *Les inscriptions d'Aśoka*, p. 97). In two versions of the edict, the verb which is the adjunct of *parisā* is in the plural. This has led Barua, and Ghoshal in his wake, to the erroneous conclusion that *parisā* meant *pulisā* (*puruṣās*), which in this context denoted "the royal secretariat" (see U.N. Ghoshal, *Studies...*, p. 414).
119. This passage is rather difficult to translate and interpret, and has given rise to sharp polemics. D. Bhandarkar justly remarked this text as most complicated (D. Bhandarkar, *Aśoka*, p. 266). (For a detailed analysis, see G.M. Bongard-Levin, '*Pariṣad...*' *loc. cit.*).
120. V. Smith, 'Aśoka Notes', *Ind. Ant.*, vol. 37, 1905, pp. 19-24.
121. H.K. Deb, 'Notes on Some Edicts of Aśoka', *JASB*, New Series, vol. 16, pp. 331-337.
122. "And if with respect to what I order orally [the officials]—"the giver" or "the hearer" or charge mahāmātras with some urgent commission—there arises in the assembly of royal dignitaries (pariṣa) a disagreement or dispute, [this] must be immediately reported to me anywhere and at any time." The duty of "the giver" was evidently to distribute the gifts on the king's orders; "the hearer" listed to the king's instructions and then reported them to the assembly of the dignitaries, since the emperor need not have attended it in person.
123. An interesting analysis of the history of the *pariṣad* on the basis of early sources was made by R.S. Sharma, who proved that in the Vedic period the *pariṣad* had been a tribal assembly, whereafter its membership had gradually become restricted until it turned into a council of dignitaries, a gathering of Brāhmaṇas, etc. (R.S. Sharma, *Aspects of Political Ideas...*, ch. IX).
124. V.S. Agrawala, *India as known to Pāṇini*, pp. 399-400. Pāṇini also knew about a secret royal council whose membership was highly restricted (lit. "invisible to six eyes"—*aṣaḍaksīṇa*), R.S. Sharma, *Aspects of Political Ideas...*, p. 130.
125. See G.M. Bongard-Levin, 'K vykhodu..., *loc. cit.*, p. 243.
126. G.M. Bongard-Levin, 'Pariṣad...', *loc. cit.*, p. 402.
127. ... *atha rājāśokaḥ saṃvigro 'mātyān paurāṃsca saṃnipātya* (*Div.*, p. 431).
128. Instead of *pauras* and *jānapadas* the sources often use *prakṛti*—"people", "common people". According to the *Amarakośa*, *prakṛtayas* are associated with the organisations (*śreṇi*) of townsmen (*prakṛtayaḥ paurāṇāṃ śreṇayo' pi ca*). Data on late-Vedic ceremonies are systematised by U.N. Ghoshal (U.N. Ghoshal, 'An Aspect of State Administration in the pre-Maurya Period. Influence of Public Opinion on Kingly Government',

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JIH, vol. 40, pt 3, 1962, pp. 551-555).

129. In the *Rāmāyaṇa*, for instance, *pauras* and *janapadas* together with Brāhmaṇas (*brāhmaṇa*) and military leaders (*balamukhya*) first discuss the appointment of a successor to the throne (*yuvarāja*) and only then report their consent to the king (*Ayodhyā-kāṇḍa*, II.19-22, 26-51).
130. It is stated in the *Rāmāyaṇa* that, alongside the chief dignitaries (*mantrinas*), the *sabhā* included Vaiśyas (*naigamas*) and representatives of the common people (*prakṛtayas*).
131. Of particular interest is the evidence of Rudradāman's inscription on the role of *paura-janapada* in the affairs of the state (*EI*, 8, p. 44f.).
132. See G.M. Bongard-Levin, *Drevneindiyskiye rājā-sabhā...*, *loc. cit.*; by the same author, *Indika Megasfena...*, *loc. cit.*, pp. 3-5.
133. Patañjali also mentions a *sabhā* under King Puṣyamitra, the founder of the Śuṅga dynasty.
134. G.M. Bongard-Levin, 'Nekotoriye osobennosti...', *loc. cit.*, p. 31.
135. See N.A. Jayavickrama, *The Inception...*, *loc. cit.*, p. 173.
136. K.P. Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*, pp. 311-312; R.S. Sharma, *Aspects...*, p. 99; J.W. Spellman, *Political Theory...*, pp. 92-95.
137. This term is linked with the boule, a council in Athens, which usually consisted of 500 members. It is interesting that, according to the *Div.* (p. 372), King Bindusāra had 500 councillors (*amātyas*).
138. For more details, see G.M. Bongard-Levin, *Drevneindiyskiye rāja-sabhā...*, *loc. cit.*, pp. 158-161.
139. For more details, see P.V. Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra*, vol. 3, p. 184.
140. *Arth.*, V. 2.
141. *Ibid.*, VIII. 4.
142. For more details, see J. Gonda, *Ancient Indian Kingship...*, p. 11.
143. *Mbh.*, XII.71.10; see also K.V. Rangaswami Aiyangar, *Aspects...*, p. 99.
144. *devānayiyena piyadasina lājina vīsativa sābhisitena atana āgāca mahīyyite hide buddha jāte sakyamunī ti silāvigaḍabhī cā kālāpita ṣilāthabhe ca usapāpite hida bhagavaṃ jāt ti luṃminigāme ubalika kaṭe aṭhabhāgiye ca* (J. Bloch, *Les inscriptions d'Aśaka*, p. 157; SI, p. 67).
145. For more details, see U.N. Ghoshal, *Contribution...*, pp. 4-10; *Vedic Index*, vol. II, p. 62.
146. It is only in some later *Saṁhitās* and *Brāhmaṇas* that the term *bhāga-dugha* occurs, which the commentator Sāyaṇa sometimes defined as "tax collector".
147. P.V. Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra*, III, p. 190.
148. F.W. Thomas, 'Ubalike and Yukta', *JRAS*, 1909, pp. 466-467; by the same author, 'Notes on the Edicts of Aśoka', *JRAS*, 1914, pp. 391-392; D. Bhandarkar, *Aśoka*, p. 396. In Vedic texts *bali* sometimes meant "offering to gods" (*Vedic Index*, vol. II, p. 62). On the basis of the evidence of the *Arthaśāstra* and its commentators, U.N. Ghoshal disagrees with this interpretation.
149. U.N. Ghoshal, *Contribution...*, p. 36. According to Bhaṭṭasvāmin's commentary *bali* was the impost equal to a one-tenth or one-twentieth share taken over and above a sixth share. See A. Bose, *Special and Rural*

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Economy, vol. I, p. 124. *Bali* is used in the same sense in some *Jātakas*. The term occurs in the *Milindapañho* with the meaning "extra text". A. Bose interprets *bali* as the king's irregular levy from agricultural estates.

150. This is the opinion of most of the sources (*Manu*, VII.308; *Nārada*, XVIII.48; *Viṣṇu*, III.24).
151. L. Gopal, *The Economic Life...*, p. 35. According to *Vṛddhahārita Smṛti* (IV.204), the largest share was one-third of the crop. Interesting are also the data of the *Purāṇas* (see B.B. Mishra, *Polity in the Agni Purāṇa*, Calcutta, 1965).
152. Cited in D.N. Jha, *Revenue System...*, p. 39.
153. See B.P. Mazumdar, *The Socio-Economic History of Northern India*, Calcutta, 1960, p. 229.
154. Cited in D.N. Jha, *Revenue System...*, p. 40.
155. R. Dikshitar, *The Mauryan Polity*, p. 142.
156. R. Thapar. *Aśoka...*, p. 65.
157. U.N. Ghoshal, *Contribution...*, p. 174.
158. *Ibid.*, p. 175.
159. The same figure is also given in Gautama (X.27). See P.V. Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra*, vol. III, p. 192.
160. See D.N. Jha, *Revenue System...*, p. 59.
161. Quoted from the translation by V.V. Vertogradova in *Khrestomatiya po istorii drevnego vostoka* [*Reader in the History of Anicent Orient*] Moscow, 1963, p. 376.
162. *Ind.*, XII. 1.
163. Strabo, XV. 1.51.
164. D.N. Jha, *Revenue System...*, pp. 70-71. Kauṭilya gives different figures.
165. Cf. Manu (VII. 127) : "Let the king compel the traders to pay the tax."
166. U.N. Ghoshal, *Contribution...*, p. 37.
167. *Sam.*, I. 52.
168. Patañjali (v. 3.99); *Mauryair hiraṇyārthibhir arcaḥ prakalpitaḥ* (cf. *A Comprehensive History of India*, vol. 2. p. 61).
169. For more details, see P.V. Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra*, vol. 2. pt I, pp. 143-146.
170. D.N. Jha, *Revenue System...*, pp. 124-125.
171. U.N. Ghoshal, *Contribution...*, p. 137; P.V. Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra*, vol. II, pt I, p. 149.
172. For more details on the position of the Brāhmaṇas, see ch. 3, 4 of the present book.
173. P.V. Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra*, vol. 2, pt I, p. 125.
174. *Vasiṣṭha*, XIX. 23-24. They are called *rajapuman* (king's men) there.
175. The Śūdras were included in this group, since they were assumed not to possess any property; however, this rule was frequently disregarded.
176. G.M. Bongard-Levin, *Indika...*, *loc. cit.*
177. See D.N. Jha, *Revenue System...*, p. 140.
178. For the taxation system in the republics, see § 6.
179. *J.*, IV. 30.59; II. 17; IV. 289.

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180. J. Marshall, *Taxila*, vol. I, p. 110; vol. 3, p. 234.
181. G.M. Bongard-Levin, O.F. Volkova, *Legenda o Kunale...*, pp. 99-101.
182. For example K.D. Bajpai, 'Authority of Minting Coins in Ancient India,' *JNSI*, vol. 25, pt I, 1968, pp. 17-21.
183. R. Thapar, *Aśoka...*, p. 114.
184. B. Timmer, *Megasthenes ....*
185. *Pap.*, II. 987.
186. *VP.*, IV. 116.
187. For more details, see M.O. Kosven, *Semeinaya obshchina i patronimiya* [*Family, Community and Patronymy*], Moscow, 1963, esp. pp. 192-194.
188. *EI.*, vol. 8, p. 83.
189. Venket Rao translates "an assembly of the citizens", but it is hardly possible that at the time the *sabhā* was a highly representative assembly (see G. Yazdani, ed., *The Early History of Deccan*, p. 135). *Nigama* might mean either a city (or its part) or an association. (For details, see K.P. Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*, p. 244; S.K. Maity, *The Economic Life...*, pp. 156-157). The deeds of the Gupta time from Damodarpur mention the city council (*adhiṣṭhānanādhikaraṇa*), which included the city head (*nagara-śreṣṭhin*), the head of the traders (*sārthavāha*), evidently, the head of the craftsmen's association (*prathamakulika*), and the chief scribe (*prathama-kāyastha*). The inscriptions have been interpreted differently by scholars (see S.K. Maity, *The Economic Life...*, pp. 156-157; *SI*, p. 293). According to a late commentator of the Smṛti texts (Vīramitrodaya), there existed in the city a special council of the townsmen : *paurāḥ puravāsināṃ samūnāḥ* (K.P. Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*, p. 236).
190. R.C. Majumdar, *Corporate Life ...*, p. 144.
191. A. Bose, *Social and Rural Economy*, vol. 2, pp. 187-188; S.K. Maity, *The Economic Life...*, p. 156.
192. See K.D. Bajpai, 'Authority of Mining Coins ...,' *loc., cit.*
193. *Div.*, pp. 410-411.
194. For details, see A. Bose, *Social and Rural Economy*, vol. II. p. 240. There are many indications of the severity of the laws of *śreṇi* in Bṛhaspati (for more details, see S.K. Maity, *The Economic Life...*, pp. 157-158).
195. Despite its obvious importance, the problem of the provincial administration in the Mauryan empire has not been investigated thoroughly enough. For the most part the scholars depend solely on the evidence of the *Arthaśāsrra*, which makes it impossible to find out the peculiarities of the administrative system of the Mauryan empire. The evidence provided by Aśoka's edicts is, of course, very limited, but it is very important. It is only after a careful selection of the Mauryan data (Aśoka's inscriptions, Megasthenes' *Indika*) that a comparison with the report of the *Arthaśāstra* will be possible.

    An interesting attempt at such a comparison is U.N. Ghoshal's *A History of Indian Public Life...* . However, the author merely points out the problems, and does not give an analysis of specific evidence. A comparison of some evidence has been carried out by R. Thapar (*Aśoka...*, ch. IV).

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196. Contrary to the widespread view which takes *vijita* to mean the whole of Aśoka's empire, epigraphy shows that it constituted only the core of the state, the territory under the personal control of the emperor and his officials. This interpretation of the term *vijita* makes it possible to distinguish the areas included in the *vijita* from those outside, which eventually determined their position in the entire system of state administration.
197. *Dīp.*, VI. 15; *Mah.*, XIII. 18; *Sam.*, I. 45.
198. V.S. Sukhtankar, 'A Selection of Literary References to Taxila Gleaned from Indian Sources'—*ARAST*. 1914.
199. Pāṇini knew about the northern route (*uttarāpatha*) from Gandhāra to eastern territories (V.S. Agrawala, *India as Known to Pāṇini*, pp. 140-142, 244). From Gandhāra it ran on westwards up to the Oxus (the Amu-Darya) (see W.W. Tarn, *The Greeks*.... pp. 488-490).
200. *Div.*, pp. 371-372, 407; *Aśokāvadānamālā*, 67-92; G.M. Bongard-Levin, O.F. Volkova, *Legenda o Kuṇāle*..., pp. 60-61. See also J. Przyluski, *Légende*..., p. 234; R. Mitra, *The Sanscrit Buddhist Literature*, p. 9.
201. *The History of Buddhism*, p. 51.
202. Kṣemendra and the *Aśokāvadāna* mention a rebellion of the Taxila citizens under the leadership of Kuñjarakarṇa. He opposed the state officials, *āmātyas*, against whom the population rose. Although the texts style Kuñjarakarṇa king, the ruler of Taxila (*Takṣaśilādhinātha*), he was certainly not the ruler of the province (a post that could only be held by a royal offspring), but, probably, the head of the local municipal administration. The study of coins found in the town also testifies to some independence enjoyed by Taxila in the Mauryan epoch : of a total of 179 copper coins of local mint found in the Bhir Mound, 134 belonged to the Mauryan period (see J. Marshall, *Taxila*, vol. I, p. 110; vol. 2, p. 756).
203. *Dīp.*, VI. 15; *Mah.*, V. 39; XIII. 8.
204. *Mah.*, XIII. 8 (*Avanti-raṭṭham bhuñjanto pitarā dinnam attano, so Asoko kumāro he Ujjeninagaraṃpura*); V. 39 (*pitarā dinnaṃ rajjaṃ Ujjeniyaṃ*).
205. *Ind. Arch.*, 1956-1957, p. 20; Y.D. Sharma, 'Remains . . .,' *loc. ctt.*, p. 69.
206. For details, see G.M. Bongard-Levin, 'Nekotoriye osobennosti . . .', *loc. cit.*, p. 37.
207. A. Woolner, *ATG*, I, p. 33; *Suvarṇṇagirīte ayyaputassa mahāmātāṇaṃ ca vacanena.*
208. On the basis of Pāli literature, in which the term *ayaputa* (*āryaputra*) is used to designate an independent ruler, D. Bhandarkar has arrived at the conclusion that the *ayaputa* of the Karnataka edicts stood for a prince of royal blood, who was higher in rank (D. Bhandarkar, *Aśoka*, p. 50); The scholar shared Fleet's opinion that the *ayaputa* acted for Emperor Aśoka in his absence (*JRAS*, 1908, pp. 497-822). It must be recalled, however, that Fleet advanced this view on the basis of the identification of Suvarṇagiri with Rājagṛha, the ancient capital of Magadha. At present there can be no doubt that this identification is wrong (a number of facts show conclusively that Suvarṇagiri lay in the south of the empire).

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A. Sen maintained that this term *ayaputa* denotes a brother, a cousin of the king or even the king himself (A. Sen, *Aśoka* . . ., p. 14). A different opinion was expressed by H. Raychaudhuri who maintained that an *ayaputa* (*āryaputra*) was merely a member of the royal family (*Political History* . . ., p. 316); this word with the meaning "crown prince" occurs in a number of *Jātakas* (for example, in the *Khaṇḍahāla-Jātaka*), which was already noted by G. Bühler. E. Senart translated it as "local chief". Interesting data on the position of crown princes are to be found in Pāṇini's grammar. They were denoted by the general title of *rāja-putra* (IV. 2. 39) and *rāja-kumāra* (VI.2.59). The son by the first wife became the heir-apparent; *yuvarāja*. Pāṇini calls him *ārya-kumāra*. All this suggests that during Aśoka's reign the *āryaputra* held a position superior to that of the *kumāra*.

209. *Ujje-(ni)-te pi cu kumāle etāye va aṭhāye (ni) khāma (yisa)-[ti]. Hedisam eva no ca vagam atikāmayisati timn(i) vasāni. Hemeva T-(a)-kha-(si)-late pi.*
210. J. Bloch, *Les inscriptions d'Aśoka*, p. 136; U.N. Ghoshal, *A History of Indian Political Ideas*, *loc.cit.*, p. 265.
211. D. Bhandarkar, *Aśoka*, p. 48.
212. J. Bloch, *Les inscriptions d'Aśoka*, pp. 96, 139-140.
213. "After every five years, let there be (a public) humiliation for this express object, yet for the suppression of disgraceful acts . . ." (J. Prinsep, 'Inscription in Old Characters on the Rocks of Girnar in Gujarat and Dhauli in Cuttack, *JASB*, vol. 7, 1838, p. 250).
214. A. Woolner, *ATG*, II, p. 62; in A.K. Bose's translation "courthouse", "citadel" (A.K. Bose Anusaṁyāna, *IHQ*, vol. 9, 1933, p. 811).
215. K.P. Jayaswal, 'The Terms Anusaṃyāna, Rajukas and Former Kings in Aśoka's Inscription', *JBORS*, vol. IV, 1918, pp. 36-43. This view was supported by V. Smith (*Aśoka*, p. 164) and R. Dikshitar (*The Mauryan Polity*, p. 132). K.P. Jayaswal's interpretation raised a justified objection on the part of A. Woolner ('Quinquennial Circuit or Transfers of Aśoka's Officials', *Journal of the Panjab University Historical Society*, vol. I, 1932, pp. 109-112). Unfortunately, his work has been inaccesible to us. For Woolner's conclusion, see M.A. Mehendale, *Aśokan Inscriptions* . . ., p. 95.
216. H. Kern, 'On Separate Edict at Dhauli and Jaugada,' *JRAS*, 1880, pp. 379-394.
217. R. Mookerji, *Aśoka*, p. 134.
218. *CII*, I, p. 6.
219. V. Smith, who shared K.P. Jayaswal's view, noted that after a certain time the ministers in the council were replaced in order to prevent abuse likely to spring from a long stay of the same persons in one province. R. Dikshitar proved the correctness of this interpretation, referring to the great power wielded by provincial officials. He emphasised the discontent of the inhabitants of Taxila with the dignitaries' activity. However, the introduction of inspection tours in no way contradicts this. On the contrary, it was precisely against the wilfulness of the provincial authorities

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and for exercising control over them that such tours of the country were undertaken.

It should be noted that in the twenty-first line of the Dhauli version of the Ist Special Edict, the word *anusaṃyāna* is missing, the text containing only the verb *nikhāmayisāmi* "I will send". It is natural that if *anusaṃyāna* is understood as "tour", "trip", the omission of the word does not change the meaning of the edict. This example may serve as another argument against the conclusion of K.P. Jayaswal, R. Dikshitar and others. The term *anusaṃyāna* in the sense "tour of inspection" was found by D. Bhandarkar on one of the seals of Basarh : *Vesāla-anusaṃyāna-kaṭakare*, *ARASI*, 1913-1914; see also D. Bhandarkar, *Aśoka*, pp. 264-265. Fa-hien's evidence that Aśoka made a tour of inspection of his domain is also interesting (see *The Travels of Fa-hien (388-411 A.D.) or Record of the Buddhistic Kingdoms*, retranslated by H.A. Giles, (Cambridge, 1923, p. 56).

220. B.M. Barua, *Aśoka* . . ., p. 158.

221. For more detail, see G.M. Bongard-Levin, 'Nekotoriye osobennosti . . .,' *loc. cit.*, p. 42.

222. J. Bloch, *Les inscriptions Aśoka*, p. 140. In the Ist Special Edict, Aśoka speaks about the dispatch of officials by the princes of Taxila and Ujjayinī and fails to mention similar tours arranged by the ruler of the South in Suvarṇagiri. It is hardly likely that such tours were not made in such an important province. It is even less likely that in the south, in a province governed by a prince of the highest rank (*ayaputa*) they were carried out by the emperor himself as was done in Kaliṅga. In all probability, the edicts merely fail to refer to the existence of such a practice there. It is not impossible, however, that a special, privileged position of the province, with its centre in Suvarṇagiri, also determined the peculiar forms of its administration, and, in particular, the absence of inspection tours.

223. B.M. Barua, *Aśoka*.... He believes that the *mahāmātras* who headed the main provinces, including Kaliṅga, were originally called *rājavacanika*. After princes had been appointed there, they became mere provincial officials. This view has been recently criticised by U. Ghoshal (*A History of Indian Public Life*, p. 268). B. Barua's opinion is shared by B.N. Puri (*History of Indian Administration*, vol. I, Bombay, 1957, p. 53).

224. D. Bhandarkar, *Aśoka*, pp. 63-64.

225. For instance, one may refer to the *Aṅguttara-Nikāya* (I.59-60), which states : "When brigands are strong, kings are weak. It is not easy for a king to get on the [march], ride out, to inspect [*anusaññātum*] the border areas, to visit Brāhmaṇas and householders, to learn about external events."

226. Of interest is the mention of Brāhmaṇas and householders. Evidently, the inspectors supervised various groups of the population and the general state of affairs in the province. This statement of the *Aṅguttara-Nikāya* has parallels in Aśoka's inscriptions. In the VIIIth Major Rock Edict, the emperor speaks of his tours during which he "visits Brāhmaṇas and Śramaṇas... and meets the population of the *janapada*." It may be

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supposed that in this case the central authority pursued certain political ends.

227. G.M. Bongard-Levin, '"Āhāle" (po dannym mauriyskoi epigrafiki') ['"Āhāle" (according to the data of Mauryan Epigraphy')], *Kratkiye soobshcheniya instituta narodov Azii* [*Brief Communications of the Institute of the Peoples of Asia*"], v. 57, 1961.
228. B.M. Barua, 'Inscriptional Excursions', *IHQ*, vol. 2, 1926, p. 128.
229. J. Bloch, *Les inscriptions d'Aśoka*, p. 140.
230. V.S. Agrawala, *India as Known to Pāṇini*, p. 424.
231. D.C. Sircar, *Studies in the Geography*..., pp. 19-21. In the *śāstras* (Manu, IX.294, Viṣṇu, III.33) the term *janapada* denotes the territory of the country as one of the seven foundations of the state. In other texts the term *rāṣṭra* is used.
232. N. Wagle, *Society at the Time of the Buddha*, pp. 29-34.
233. U.N. Ghoshal, *A History of Indian Public Life*, p. 266.
234. The edicts mention city officials of Pāṭaliputra, Kauśāmbī, Tosali, Samāpā, Suvarṇagiri, Iśila and other towns, alongside rural officials. For the division of officials into urban and rural, see Strabo, XV.I.50.
235. V.S. Agrawala, *India as Known to Pāṇini*, pp. 477-491.
236. N. Wagle, *Society at the Time of Buddha*, pp. 30-36.
237. N.P. Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*, p. 229. P.V. Kane resolutely objects to K.P. Jayaswal, who sought to prove that the *janapada* had existed as a political institution endowed with strong power (P.V. Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra*, vol. 3, pp. 93-94). Although many of K.P. Jayaswal's conclusions seem rather naive today, some of his evidence deserves attention. R.S. Sharma justly notes that although K.P. Jayaswal's theory of the central assembly, *paura-janapada*, is not sufficiently supported by the evidence of the sources, some of his arguments cannot be ignored altogether.
238. N. Wagle, *Society at the Time of the Buddha*, pp. 29-36.
239. R.S. Sharma, *Aspects of Political Ideas*..., p. 247. These references are cited by K.P. Jayaswal (*Hindu Polity*) and R.K. Mookerji (*Local Government*); see also A.S. Altekar, *State*..., pp. 153-155.
240. Strabo, XV.1.50. Although this report contains no references to Megasthenes, it is evidently a part of the *Indika*; see E.A. Schwanbeck, *Megasthenes*..., fragment XXXIV; R.C. Majumdar (*JAOS*, vol. 78, 1958, pp. 273-276) doubts that this passage stems from the pen of Megasthenes.
241. Strabo has agoranomoi, but it should be read as agronomoi (see O. Stein, *Megasthenes und Kauṭilya*, pp. 223-235). The acceptance of the former version, and hence of the translation "officials responsible for the market" (McCrindle, *Ancient India as Described by Megasthenes*..., p. 85) would be in conflict with the tenor of the passage as a whole. Aristotle (*Polity*, VII, 11, 4) distinguished between officials supervising the market and rural officials linked with the *hora*, but also charged with supervision.
242. According to the II MiRe from Yerragudi, *rajjukas* were to acquaint the population of the *janapada* (*jānapada anāpayisati*) with the emperor's edict, which appealed to lead the people of the *janapada* (*janaṃ*

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jāna-padam, IV MjRE) towards happiness and prosperity.

243. Etymologically *Rajjuka* (*rajjuko*) goes back to *rajju* ("rope") and corresponds to the *rajjugāhaka* of the Pāli *Jātakas* (G. Bühler, 'Aśoka's Rajukas oder Lajukas', *ZDMG*, Bd 47 1893, pp. 466-471). K.P. Jayaswal (*JBORS*, vol. 4, 1918, pp. 36-43) linked it with the Skr. *rājan*. Suniti Kumar Chatterji (U.N. Ghoshal, *Studies...*, pp. 455-456) proved the impossibility of such a correlation. The data of early Buddhist and Jaina literature show that initially the function of *rajjukas* included measuring land in the countryside by means of a rope (see *J.*, II, p. 376; J.C. Jain, *Life...*, p. 62). In the *Arthaśāstra* (II.20), *rajju* occurs as a measure of area.

244. Among the revenues from the countryside, Kauṭilya (II.6) mentions *rajjū* and *cora-rajjū*.

245. Aśoka's VIth Major Pillar Edict states that the *rajjukas* "know [the source] of happiness (*sukhīyana*)." "I have appointed *rajjukas*," Aśoka says, "for the prosperity and happiness of [the population of] the *janapada* (*jānapadasa hitasukhīye*)." The VIIth Major Rock Edict reads : "Fig-trees have been planted by me along the roads, I have ordered to dig wells every half a *kośa* and build shelters with water for men and animals, and arrange stopping-places". But the main benefit lies not in this. Indeed, various measures to make [people] prosperous (*sukhāyanāya*) had also been taken by previous kings." The comparison of the two edicts warrants the supposition that *sukhīyana* meant organisation of public works, digging of wells and reservoirs, building of roads, etc. Evidently, the *rajjukas* who "know [the source] of happiness" and "lead the people of the *janapada* to happiness and prosperity" must have participated directly in the implementation of these undertakings. A coincidence of details is noteworthy. According to Megasthenes, *agronomoi*, in building roads put up every 10 *stadia* a pillar indicating a place for rest, a roadside stopping-place or a turn of the road. The VIIth Major Pillar Edict also reports the constructions of stopping-places and shelters (*niṃsidhiyā*) every half a *kośa*.

246. *etena me lajjūhānam abhihāle va daṃḍe va attapatiye kaṭe* (IV MjRE). Interpretation of *abhihāle* has given rise to much debate. Bühler translated it as "honour", "respect"; Lüders as "award"; Jayaswal as "military actions"; Senart as "persecution"; Bask as "attack", "accusation", "complaint", "arrest". It is interesting that besides "respect", "award" Greek "*time*" also means "punishment".

247. For example, the IV MjRE and the I SE from Dhauli and Jaugada (J. Bloch, *Les inscription d'Aśoka*, pp. 96-164).

248. G.M. Bongard-Levin, "*Indika*... loc. cit, p. 8.

249. J. Bloch, *Les inscription d'Aśoka*, pp. 159, 153.

250. R. Dikshitar, *The Mauryan Polity*, p. 203.

251. Opinions on the meaning of the term *āhāle* vary. J. Fleet linked *āhāle* with *āhale* "food", and therefore, gave a different interpretation of the whole edict from Sarnath (J. Fleet, 'The Date of Budhha's Death as Determined by a Record of Aśoka', *JRAS*, 1904, p. 22). A. Venis seems to have been

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the first to give the correct interpretation ("district"); later he was supported by E. Hultzsch, D. Bhandarkar and others. This opinion is shared by present-day students of Mauryan epigraphy (see A. Venis, 'Some Note on the Mauryan Inscription at Sarnath, *JPrASB*, New Series, vol. 3, 1907, E. Hultzsch, 'The Rupnath and Sarnath Edicts of Aśoka', *JRAS*, 1910. *CII*, I, p. 161-164; D. Bhandarkar *Aśoka*, pp. 332-342; D.S. Murti, A.N. Krishna Aiyangar, *Edicts of Aśoka*, pp. 83, 129).

252. Some authors believe that the Sarnath edict refers to the *mahāmātras* of Pāṭaliputra (E. Hultzsch, 'The Rupnath... *loc. cit.*, p. 128), but a comparison of this edict with other Aśokan inscriptions shows that this edict was addressed to local officials who headed Sarnath district (G.M. Bongard-Levin, Āhāle... *loc. cit.*, pp. 13-14).

253. H. Kern related *koṭa* with the Tamil *koṭṭam*, "village", "rural settlement"; A. Venis translated : "in all quarters where strongholds are" (A. Venis, 'Some Note on the Mauryan Inscription at Sarnath, *loc. cit.*,); E. Hultzsch; "in territories surrounding forts" (E. Hultzsch, 'The Rupnath..., *loc cit*,, p. 1058); D. Bhandarkar : "in all fortified towns and the district subdivisions" (D. Bhandarkar, *Aśoka*, p. 341); he is followed by R. Basak (*Asokan Inscriptions*, p. 148); D.C. Sircar: "to all tracts around fortified towns", (*Inscriptions of Aśoka*, *loc. cit.*, p. 65), Bloch : "dans tous les territoies fortifiés" (J. Bloch, *Les inscription d'Aśoka*, p. 153).

254. An analysis of the Sarnath inscription shows that Aśoka addressed not monks, as many scholars believed, but the local officials—*mahāmātras*. It was to them that the emperor's order to put up a copy of the edict for officials was sent ("let one inscription be put up for you"). Vogel linked *saṃsalana* with the Skr. *saṃsaraṇa* (J. Ph. Vogel, 'Epigraphical Discoveries at Sarnath,' *EI*, vol. 8, pp. 166-171). Thomas objected to this interpretation, but his translation ("cloisters") is at variance with the general purport of the edict (see also D. Bhandarkar, *Aśoka*, p. 342; R. Basak, *Aśokan inscriptions*, p. 148; A. Sen, *Aśoka* . . ., p. 131; J. Bloch, *Les inscriptions d'Aśoka*, p. 153).

255. R.S. Sharma, *Aspects* . . ., pp. 130-135, 137, 224-225, 243-248; N. Wagle, *Society at the time of the Buddha*, pp. 13-22; Kangle, III, p. 197.

256. *Mahāvagga*, V. I.

257. Inspections were also carried out by the *pradeṣṭṛs* of the *Arthaśāstra* (II. 35).

258. B.N. Puri, *History of Indian Administration*, vol. I, pp. 61-62. D. Bhandarkar's view, according to which *aṃta-mahāmātras* were officials sent to a neighbouring state to spread the Dharma, is objectionable.

259. It is hard to agree with U.N. Ghoshal's opinion that bureacracy reached its peak in the Mauryan epoch (U.N.) Ghoshal, *A History of Indian Public Life*, p. 242).

260. For details, see, R.S. Sharma, *Aspects of Political Ideas* . . .,

261. See I.M. Dyakonov, *Obshchestvenny i gosudarstvenny stroi drevnego Dvurechya* [*Social and State System of Ancient Mesopotamia*], Moscow, 1959, pp. 120-150; D.G. Reder, 'Voyennaya demokratiya v stranakh drevnego Vostaka' [Military Democracy in the Countries of Ancient

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Orient',] *Uchyoniye zapiski Moskovskogo oblastnogo pedagogicheskogo instituta* [*Transactions of the Moscow Region Pedagogical Institute*], vol. 14, 1950, pp. 117-127; V.V. Ivanov, 'Proiskhozhdeniye khetskogo termina "panku"—"sobraniye" ' [The Origin of the Hittite term panku—"assembly"], *Vestnik drevney istorii* [*Bulletin of Ancient History*], No. 4, 1958, 1957, No. 1; I.S. Katsnelson, 'Nekotoriye cherty gosudarstvenogo stroya Nubii v VI-IV vv. do n.e.'] Some Features of the State System of Nubia in the 6th-4th cent. B.C.], *XXV Mezhdunarodniy kongress vostokovedov* [*25th International Congress of Orientalists*], Moscow, 1960; L.S. Perelomov, 'Ob organakh obschinnogo samoupravleniya v Kitaye v V-III vv. do n.e., Organs of Communal Self-Government in China in the 5th-3rd cent. B.C.'] *Istoriya i kultura Dalnego Vostoka* [*History and Culture of Ancient Orient*], Moscow, 1962, pp. 45-47.

263. See, for example, Y. Mishra, *The Early History of Vaiśālī*; J.P. Sharma, *Republics in Ancient India* (1500 B.C.—500 B.C.), Leiden, [1968; R.S. Sharma, *Aspects of Political Ideas*....
264. T.W. Rhys Davids. *Buddhist India*. For a discussion of Rhys Davids' conclusions, see J.P. Sharma's work (*Republics*..., pp. 1-2).
265. J.E. Fleet, 'Malava-Gaṇa-Sthiti', *JRAS*, 1914, pp. 745-747; *ibid.*, 1915, pp. 138-140, 802-804.
266. K.P. Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*.
267. See S.A. Dange, *India from Primitive Communism... to slavery*, 5 ed., New Delhi, 1972, K.P. Jayaswal is reproached for his outright tendentiousness by some other Indian scholars, J. Sharma in particular.
268. *Gaṇa* (from the verb *gaṇ* "to count") has different meanings : "group", "a large number", "gathering", "company", etc.; *saṅgha* means "combination", "gathering", "crowd", "group", "society", "community", etc. For different interpretations of these terms, see J.P. Sharma, Republics... .
269. See, for example, *The Age of Imperial Unity*, pp. 330-334.
270. D. Bhandarkar defined *saṅgha* and *gaṇa* as "union of individuals organised for a definite purpose". According to R.C. Majumdar, *saṅgha* in Pāṇini means organisation held together by laws and rules. Scholars' views of the meanings of the more specific terms are no less different. D. Bhandarkar, for instance, considered the *āyudhajīvī saṅgha* as one of the orders of the royal army. For the main viewpoints, see U.N. Ghoshal, *Studies*..., ch. XI; J.P. Sharma, *Republics*... (Introduction); C.R. Rao, 'Ancient Indian Republics *MR*, No. 106, 1959 pp. 273-286. J. Sharma justly criticised many scholars for employing modern constitutional concepts for describing ancient republican forms of polity. This tendency was typical of works by Indian scholars published at the beginning of the 20th century.
271. See G.M. Bongard-Levin, *Respubliki*..., *loc. cit.*, pp. 8-35.
272. For details, see R.S. Sharma, *Aspects*..., ch. VIII. R.S. Sharma rightly maintains that the *gaṇas* of the Vedic epoch were tribal organisations; however, he interprets the term *gaṇa* as used in Vedic texts as "a technical word to designate a republic," an interpretation that is difficult to accept. For criticism of his work, see J. Sharma (*Republics*...). J. Sharma believes

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that special forms of aristocratic government existed as far back as the Vedic epoch. In his opinion, the Vedic texts make it possible to distinguish at least four forms of "government by discussion".

273. J.R. Sharma, *Republics...*, 62.
274. K.P. Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*, ch. XIV: U.N. Ghoshal, *A History of Indian Political Ideas*, pp. 197-199.
275. B. Ch. Law, *India as Described...*, Y. Mishra, 'The Buddha's Activities at Vaiśālī', *JIH*, vol. 25, No. 1, 1957, pp. 7-36.
276. For details, see G. De. *Democracy in Early Buddhist Saṅgha*, Calcutta, 1955; U.N. Ghoshal, *Studies...*, pp. 371-380.
277. V.S. Agrawala, *India as Known to Pāṇini*, pp. 455-475.
278. See, for example, the obvious juxtaposition in Kātyāyana; *kṣatriyād-ekarājāt saṅgha-pratiṣedhārtham* (IV.I, 168.1); see V.S. Agrawala, *India as known to Pāṇini*, p. 425; K.P. Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*, p. 29.
279. *Avadāna-Śataka*, II, p. 103.
280. *Cīvaravastu*, *Gilgit Manuscripts*, ed. by N. Dutt, vol. II, Śrinagar, 1942, 5; U. Bhattacharya, 'Glimpses of the Republic of Vaiśālī,' *IHQ*, vol. 23, 1947, No. 1.
281. See A.S. Altekar, *State....*, p. 109.
282. *Mbh* , VIII. 30; XII, 6-7; 2-16; U.N. Ghoshal, *A Histary of Indian Political Ideas*, pp. 197-199.
283. We are not always able to locate these people exactly, though the sources provide fairly substantial data on their settlement. For more details of the territory of the preceding *gaṇas*, see H. Raychaudhuri, *Political History...*
284. P. L. Gupta, 'Bearing of the Numismatics on the History of the Tribal Republics in Ancient India,' *IHQ*, vol. 27, No. 3, 1951, pp. 197-209.
285. *Lalitavistara*, I, pp. 38-39.
286. *śreṣṭhapramukho vaṇiggrāmo*.
287. *Sum.*, II. 569, *tāva vāṇijjan karonti*. The fact that members of military aristocracy engaged in trade evidently points to a poor development of commodity and mony relations.
288. *Ibid.*
289. *VP.*, II. 253.
290. *Uvāsagadasāo*, II. 52-54.
291. Quoted from see D.R. Chanana, *Rabstvo v drevney Indii* [*slavery in Ancient India*], p. 75.
292. *Aṅg N.*, III, 75-77; *Manorathapūraṇi*, V. 6.7.
393. D.R. Chanana, *Rabstvo v drevney Indii*, p. 75.
294. The importance of this issue was specially emphasised by W. Ruben ('Some Problems...' *loc. cit.*)
295. *Cīvaravastu*, p. 4; and also W.W. Rockhill, *The Life of the Buddha*, p. 62.
296. *J.*, IV. 92-93.
297. *J.*, V. 413; *Sum.*, II. 672-673.
298. D.R. Chanana, *Rabstvo v drevney Indii*, pp. 172-176.
299. *J.*, IV. 93.
300. *J.*, IV. 148.

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301. Excavations at Vaiśālī, under the direction of A. Altekar, confirmed the existence of a reservoir which local tradition linked with the reservoir of the Licchavis (*Ind. Arch., A Review*, 1957-1958, pp. 10-11; 1958-1959, p. 12; see J P. Sharma, *Republics...*, pp. 104-105).
302. *Sum.*, II. 596.
303. According to Kāśikā's commentary (II. 217), only Kṣatriyas who had passed through the consecration rite were called *rājanya* (*rājanyagrahaṇa-mihābhisiktavaṃśyānāṃ kṣatriyānām grahaṇārthaṃ*).
304. K.P. Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*, pp. 99-100.
305. V.S. Agrawala, *India as Known to Pāṇini*, pp. 430-431.
306. *Pap.*, II.273.
307. *kulān īṃ ai samūhāstu gaṇaḥ*; quoted from R.C. Majumdar, *Corporate Life...*, p. 231.
308. We do not have sufficient data at our disposal to answer the question about the *gaṇa* head's term of office. Judging by the *Cīvaravastu*, a *senāpati* held his post for life. In J. Sharma's opinion, the elected head of the Licchavis was hardly likely to have held his office for more than 10 to 15 years (J. Sharma, *Republics...*). There must have existed a definite term of office, but it is difficult to say whether this rule was observed in all the republics.
309. *vaiśalako gaṇaḥ saṃnipatitaḥ. Kiṃ vayaṃ senāpatiṃ sthāpayāma*, "The *gaṇa* of Vaiśali have assembled. Whom shall we appoint [to the post of] *senāpati* ?"
310. *eke kathayanti... apare kathayanti*, "some said... others said".
311. *Mbh.*, XII.81.5; *dāsyamaiśvaryavādena*; cf. K.P. Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*, pp. 164-165.
312. *Arth.*, p. 435 (Russian translation), For this interpretation, see G.M. Bongard-Levin, 'K vykhodu...', *loc. cit.*, p. 246.
313. A. Altekar held that *gaṇa* was understood to be a form of government (A.S. Altekar, *State...*, pp. 109-110). The vagueness of A.S. Altekar's definition was noted by J.P. Sharma (*Republics...*, p. 11).
314. Cīvaravastu, *loc. cit.*
315. See Cīvaravastu, *loc. cit.*, pp. 11-13.
316. Cīvaravastu, *loc. cit.*, p. 17. See also N. Wagle, *Society at the Time of the Buddha*, p 22.
317. *yadā gaṇaḥ saṃnipatati tadāsavāhuyamāno' pi na saṃnipatati. sa vaiśāla-kairucyate, Khaṇḍa kasmāt tvaṃ na saṃnipatasīti*, "When the *gaṇa* had assembled, he, though he was invited, failed to come. And the Vaiśālīs asked him : 'Khaṇḍa, why don't you come to the assemblies ?' "
318. *Sum.*, II.519.
319. This refers to adult male population. Women, evidently, did not take part in political life. The dialogue between the Buddha and Ānanda about the rights of women provides reasons to suppose that they had no political rights in the republics either (*Aṅg. N.*, II.82; J.P. Sharma, *Republics...*, pp. 116-117).
320. W.W. Rockhill, *The Life of the Buddha*, pp. 118-119.
321. J.P. Sharma defines the form of government in the republics as "govern-

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ment by discussion" (p. 13). This emphasises their democratic character but fails to show the differences between the republican states themselves, where the right to discussion might have become purely nominal for the people if power was becoming concentrated in the hands of the nobility and the oligarchs.

322. See Buddhaghoṣa's notes on the word *santhāgāra* : *rājakulānam atthānusāsanasanthāgārasālāyan* (*Pap.*, II.271) and *rajjam anusāsanasāla* (*Sum.*, I.256).
323. *Pap.*, III.16.
324. *Ibid.*
325. The *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī* speaks of a custom among the Mallas according to which their *rājas* ruled the country in turn. Those whose turn had not yet arrived were engaged in trade (*Mallaputto ti Mallarājaputto. Mallā kira vārena rajjan kārenti. Yāva tesan vāro na pāpuṇanti, tāva vānijjan karonti* (II.569). It is difficult to judge to what extent these reports reflected the actual state of affairs, but on the whole they agree with the political organisation typical of the early republican formations, where the principle of appointment by election was followed.

    Evidently, this rule concerned not all the *Kṣatriya-rājas*, but only those who were members of the collective body, a sort of an aristocratic council.
326. *Dig N.*, XXXII.4.
237. In the *Ekkapaṇṇa-Jātaka* it is said that there lived 7,707 *rājas* in Vaiśālī. The *Mahāvastu* puts the number of Licchavi-*rājas* at 168,000. J.P. Sharma believes the latter figure to indicate a larger population (J.P. Sharma, *Republics...*, p. 99). He thinks that the reference in the *Jātaka* to 7,707 *rājas*, 7,707 *upārājas*, 7,707 *senāpatis* (army chiefs) and 7,707 *bhāṇḍāgārikas* (treasurers), i.e., 30,828 highest officials embraced not the whole population of the town but only the Kṣatriyas (J.P. Sharma, *Republics...*, p. 100).
328. See J.P. Sharma, *Republics in Ancient India...*, *loc. cit.*, p. 82, 117, 177.
329. See Gilgit manuscripts ed. by Nilkakṣa Dutt, vol. III, pt. 1, Srinagar, 1942, p. 242.
330. *Sum.*, II.519.
331. *VP.*, IV.181-182.
332. V.S. Agrawala, *India as Known to Pāṇinī*, p. 431.

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CHAPTER V

RELIGIOUS AND PHILOSOPHICAL TRENDS

1 The Rise of Reformation Doctrines

THE MIDDLE of the first millennium B.C. in India was an epoch of intensive search and of important reforms in the religious and philosophical spheres (the two domains had not yet been clearly delimited). Vedic religion had lost much of its former prestige. The primitive character of its mythological concepts, clad in an archaic ritual, and the mercenariness of the priests—all this was at variance with the spirit of the times. The first attempt undertaken to overcome the impending crisis was the teaching recorded in the *Upaniṣads*; however, its success was but partial. Spread as "secret teaching" among a narrow circle of followers, it remained little known even to the educated section of Indian society. Moreover, for the majority of the population the *Upaniṣads* were but part of Brāhmaṇic tradition, for they practically failed to take note of the special place this teaching held within it. On the whole, the *Upaniṣads* did not reject Vedism but strove merely to resurrect it on a new and theoretically more sound foundation. In the final analysis this branch of Indian thought won a decisive victory over all other trends, but it had for a thousand years to compete with systems which expressed the spirit of reformation more radically and consistently.

Tradition called such systems non-orthodox (that is, not-recognising the authority of the Vedas) and included among them two new religions, Jainism and Buddhism as well as all schools representing the materialistic trend in Indian philosophy. The rather unexpected grouping of the materialists with the religious reformers (found in later tradition) was accounted for by the fact that both the former and the latter called in question the hitherto unchallenged value of Vedic texts and the supreme

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authority of the conventional concepts.

Generally speaking, such a grouping was not meaningless : it is no coincidence that the 6th-5th centuries B.C. are referred to as the turning point in the entire spiritual evolution of ancient Indian society. It was in these centuries that the first tangible blows were dealt at the existing thought structure and the first attempts were made to create new original concepts. True, the religious reformation schools, while rejecting the letter of traditional Brāhmaṇism, did accept many of its tenets as their point of departure. Materialism alone marked a complete rejection of the tyranny of the Brāhmaṇic way of thinking.

Between the time of the early *Upaniṣads* and the emergence of philosophical and religio-philosophical systems essentially independent of Brāhmaṇism, there lay an important period filled with intensive spiritual searching. The proponents of new ideas were people who had renounced the world and broken away from the old traditions. They were called *Parivrājakas* (literally, "wanderers", "vagrants") and Śramaṇas (later all representatives of non-orthodox trends and sects came to be identified with them).[1] Gradually the more renowned "wanderers" came to be surrounded by groups of faithful followers and later numerous trends and schools sprang up. Many of their ideas and principles were later adopted and elaborated by the founders of the major reformation doctrines.

All Śramaṇa schools rejected the authority of the Vedas and the ideological and social norms arising from them. Hence stemmed their sharp disagreement with the Brāhmaṇa's claim to being the sole bearers of supreme truth and their rejection of the social privileges of the priesthood (which was all the more drastic as the Śramaṇas and the Brāhmaṇas usually belonged to different *varṇas*).[2] In practice this led to the formation of ascetic communities.

The doctrine put forward by the Śramaṇas were noted for a serious approach to ethical problems. While rejecting the traditional *varṇa* pattern of life, sanctified by the Vedas and prescribed in detail by Vedic literature, they had to tackle the problem of man's role and place in nature and society from a completely new angle. The quantum of theoretical effort in this field varied from school to school, but doubtlessly, the concentration on ethical problems was characteristic not only of Jainism and

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Buddhism, although these two teachings did lay particular stress on problems of moral and pious behaviour.

All these new issues were thoroughly discussed : the early Buddhist texts abound in descriptions of disputes, occurring even at the courts of various rulers. Each participant was required to give sound arguments in favour of his viewpoint and show the legitimacy of his proofs. It was not fortuitous that the spread of reformation doctrines coincided with considerable progress in the domain of science.

The Śramaṇa teachers did not advance any social programme, but many of their ideas, particularly their "alienation" from "Brāhmaṇical India", made them potential allies of the rulers of ancient Indian states in their struggle against tribal fragmentation supported by the ideology of Brahmaṇism. It is noteworthy that the process of centralisation in India's political life synchronised with the tendencies towards unity in spiritual life: out of a host of different trends a few schools emerged, which received countrywide recognition and exerted considerable influence on the development of ideas and concepts of that epoch.

Buddhist tradition gives the names of six "heretical" teachers,[3] among whom are the founders of the reformation doctrines of Jainism and Ājīvikism.

The emergence of heterodox religious trends posed the question concerning their relation to the orthodox tradition. Of course, the protagonists of a new creed always believed their teaching to be unique, owing its origin solely and exclusively to the prophetic enlightenment of their teacher. Such a stand was not at all unusual : the proponents of an "authorial religion" in India, as elsewhere, invariably raised to the absolute the originality of the religion they professed. True, in India the picture was somewhat more complicated : Jainism, for example, while rejecting the traditional religion, traces its origin from a special tradition associated with the names and mythological biographies of 24 *Tīrthaṅkaras*. In this respect it lies half way between utterly "traditional" Brāhmaṇism and Buddhism, which rejected all traditionalism.

It must be said, though, that such a description stems from the Buddhists themselves. An analysis of their own teaching shows, however, that many of their claims to complete originality

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are not very convincing. On the whole, the relation between Buddhist concepts and Vedic-Brāhmaṇic ideas is extremely complicated.[4] The discussion of this problem in scientific literature revealed three possible logical solutions. Buddhism has been considered either as a quite independent teaching with no links whatsoever with any traditional trends or as a sectarian variety of Brāhmaṇism; a compromise viewpoint has also been proposed. The novel approach of Buddhism to a number of conceptual issues of religion and philosophy has been described in many Buddhological studies with utmost clarity. Its contiguity with the traditional stream of Indian religious culture and the extent to which it could be regarded as its successor, which it undoubtedly was, is less obvious.

The similarities between Buddhism and Brāhmaṇism could be seen on two planes. The stable sphere of the Indians' day-to-day religion could not change drastically with the appearance of the reformation systems. Buddhism (as well as Jainism) assimilated the ceremonial aspect of Brāhmaṇism and the traditional rites sanctioned by it; it did not anathematise the deities of Vedism. Besides, in India, unlike, for example, in the Mediterranean countries of the period of early Christianity, there existed no religious intolerance and no striving to overthrow the old cults.

Buddhism did not abolish the traditional Indian deities, but it assigned to them such an unimportant place in its system that they were bound eventually to disintegrate, as it were, by themselves. Of course, this was fraught with danger, for the deities of earlier religions, admitted to the "pantheon" of the new one, were gradually undermining it. Their inclusion in Buddhism did add to its popularity, but at the same time it exposed it to the risk of getting themselves dissolved. The tendency for a gradual rapprochement with the orthodox religion was fully manifest in those Buddhist schools which were known under the general name of "Mahāyāna".

Buddhism, as also, incidentally, the ideology of the *Upaniṣads*, was marked by indifference to specific forms of worship : these were regarded only as the starting point in the process of spiritual ascendancy. Therefore, similarities in everyday religious rites and to some extent in mythology were not in themselves evidence of any essential proximity of the two systems. But the common feature of the two traditions, namely the comprehension of these

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aspects as something elementary and of secondary importance, is suggestive of a close relationship between them. Here we come to a second group of parallels—those affecting the cardinal aspects of the doctrine.

Early Buddhism was essentially an original teaching. It differed from other Indian systems to such an extent that it has been often compared even with religions born outside India, for instance, with Christianity or Daosism. However, the fact is that many of the tenets advanced by Buddhism fit in eminently within the framework by traditional ideas. Buddhism gave them a subtler and sometimes quite independent interpretation but it never rejected them outright.

It is no accident that there is an obvious link between Buddhism and the teaching of the *Upaniṣads*. This is not to say that all principles of the two teachings are identical. It would be more reasonable to suppose that the *Upaniṣads* expressed, independently and in the clearest possible form, the new concepts arising in the course of the natural development of Vedic culture throughout India. It is possible to say about these concepts that they were ideas "in the air" and that they left an imprint on all religious and philosophical teachings of the time. The *Upaniṣads* represented the earliest among such ideas. Points of similarity with Buddhism are so obvious that there are no reasons to suppose a simultaneous are independent formulation of the same tenets. This possibility should not be ruled out in theory, but the fact is that the very *language* in which these precepts are couched is strikingly similar in the two traditions.

Like the *Upaniṣads*, Buddhism accepts rebirth and the "Law of the *Karma*". While denying the soul as an integral entity, it categorically asserts the indestructibility of the flow of spiritual existence. None of its manifestations can be annihilated : it is but a separate moment of the continuous process of transformation. The eternity of the spiritual element gives rise to the "Law of the *Karma*". Once an action does not vanish, it sooner or later must find expression in its inevitable consequences; however, being a spiritual act by nature, it is not confined within the life of the body : a new birth is thus predetermined by the previous actions or is at least strongly influenced by them. It is interesting that Buddhist literature fully reflected the principle of *Karma*, and in later texts (even as early as the *Jātakas*) used the traditional

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Brāhmaṇic image of a being passing through a series of births. This is certainly not an accidental concession to the Brāhmaṇic system of concepts : *Karma* is one of the fundamental precepts of Buddhist teaching in all its ramifications. The Buddhists failed to see in it the continuation of the ideas of a common cultural past, but their inability to see this dependence is the most striking proof of its ubiquity. Buddhism did not oppose such Brāhmaṇic ideas as these because it did not regard them as purely Brāhmaṇic.

Another important point is the idea of the goal of being and the concept of liberation. It is noteworthy that in its explanation of the concept *Nirvāṇa* Buddhism emphasises the latter's similarity with *Mokṣa* of the *Upaniṣads* (incidentally, the word *Nirvāṇa* itself also occurs in the *Upaniṣads* whence it might have been borrowed). The definition of the ideal is identical in both traditions and includes two interconnected elements : liberation from the chain of rebirths and the overcoming of duality in all its forms.

Like the *Upaniṣads*, Buddhism rejects the extremes of asceticism. However, the intensity of the negative attitude was not the same in the two traditions. Early Buddhism rejected asceticism outright, while the *Upaniṣads* spoke of the insufficiency of ascetic exercises "to attain liberation".

The preceding points by no means exhaust the range of connections between Buddhism and the heritage of the *Upaniṣads*. Yet they are sufficient to show that Buddhism, though essentially a new religious and philosophical system, did not remain on the periphery of the general stream of traditional Indian spiritual culture but was part and parcel of that culture.

Like other reformation movements of the period Buddhism became most widespread in the Ganges Valley and primarily in Magadha, which was regarded as the centre of non-orthodox teachings, where Brāhmaṇism met with greatest opposition. Orthodox tradition mentioned Magadha in connection with such tribes as were of non-Aryan descent and the Vrātya tribes which were not or were only partly Aryanised.[5] Evidently, this was the reason behind the attitute of hostility shown towards its inhabitants by many Vedic and later Vedic texts.

The brāhmaṇas considered Magadha as an inconvenient place for orthodox teachers to live in, and it was not fortuitous that it was there, judging from Buddhist and Jaina scriptures, that anti-Brāhmaṇical ideas were spread and heretical schools appeared

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early.[6] The *Majjhima-nikākya* (II. 1-2) reports that representatives of diverse sects assembled for disputations in Magadha. The *Sihanada-sutta* gives an account of 300 ascetics (*paribbājaka*) who lived near Rājagṛha and in a special hall discussed numerous problems of warfare, state functionaries, king's activity, daily life, places of habitation, and, finally, problems relating to orthodox teachings and their own doctrines.

In the *Dīgha-nikāya* (I. 47) the heads of heretic schools appear as chiefs of large groups (*gaṇācaryo*) and as persons enjoying special respect. The Buddhists did not accept the principal postulates of *such schools* (first of all, because of their neglect of ethical problems) but could not help recognising their influence. The *Samaññaphala-sutta* narrates how Buddha, surrounded by 1250 disciples in the presence of the Magadha king Ājataśatru, defended his view in a debate with the king's six ministers, each of whom supported the doctrine of one of the "heretic" teachers. It is natural that the text depicts the Buddha's triumph over his opponents, but it is obvious from the context that the doctrines of the 'heretic' teachers had by no means been forgotten by that time. Moreover, they must have enjoyed the support of the state if high state officials undertook the task of expounding their tenets. Thus, Buddhism did not have a firm foothold in the beginning and had to compete with other non-orthodox teachings to win the patronage of the Magadha kings.

Its chief rivals in the 5th-3rd centuries B.C. were the Ājīvikas. They owed their considerable popularity to their devastating and consistent criticism of Brāhmaṇism and of the social order sanctified by that religion. Their condemnation of the caste system and rejection of the Brāhmaṇic interpretation of the *Karma* met with response from the lowest sections of society as well as from the recently enriched but low-born tradesmen and craftsmen. From the very start, Gosāla appealed to "the world of laymen". The outward simplicity of the doctrine (which reduced all philosophical categories to an all-embracing predestiny, *niyati*, and the fatalism resulting from it) also appealed to large sections of the population who, even after their conversion, still clung to their previous way of life, carried out the customary rites, etc.

In the beginning (5th century B.C.), Ājīvikism seems to have had even more followers than Buddhism, and this popularity was due to its obvious leanings towards social reforms. It is not

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fortuitous that, as the *Vāyu-Purāṇa* (a source which took its final shape in the 3rd-6th centuries A.D. but stemmed from a earlier tradition) reports, the followers of the Ājīvika doctrine were Śūdras, members of mixed castes and even untouchables.[7] Buddhism and Ājīvikism were active rivals in trying to recruit new followers. It is no wonder, therefore, that the Buddhist *sūtras* speak about Gosāla and his disciples in very sharp tones. Theoretical disputes sometimes led to open clashes. Buddhaghoṣa relates that when Migāra, a usurer from Śrāvastī who had long patronised the Ājīvikas and made rich gifts to their community,[8] decided to embrace Buddhism, the Ājīvikas, his former beneficiaries, literally "besieged" his house. Evidently, they were more afraid of the prospect of losing the financial support which he had unfailingly given them than that of losing a follower.

In the Pāli Canon, Gosāla is compared to a fisherman who had cast his net in the mouth of a river and spoilt a lot of fish[9] (that is, attracted by his views many of those who could have been otherwise recruited by the Buddhists—a clear indication of the rivalry which existed between the two teachings and of the considerable popularity of Ājīvikism at the time). Its adherents are mentioned among the ascetics by Pāṇini (VI.I.154).[10]

Yet, as is well known, the rivalry between the two schools ended in the victory of Buddhism. One of the reasons was probably a certain one-sidedness of the teaching of the Ājīvikas : although they rejected the traditional Brāhmaṇic system of thought, they had no alternative system of their own to counteract it. Man's mission, his place in the world and society, the value of individual endeavour and the principles on which "the right behaviour" should be based—the problems that the Jains and the Buddhists were so much pre-occupied with—had practically remained unanswered in Gosāla's teaching. While the Ājīvikas and the Jains held their positions for a long time afterwards, the other "heretical teachers" had evidently failed to gain recognition on any significant scale even though they offered new interpretations of a number of major philosophical issues. Their utter disregard for ethical problems was invariably the reason for the Buddhists' constant attacks on them. Kassapa, for example, was attacked for his theory of "universal determinism" and "inefficacy of human deeds" (*akriya-vāda*).

The anti-Brahmaṇic attitude of the heretical teachings

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conformed to the general tendency in the development of the reformational trends, but Buddhism, with its pronounced ethical orientation, made a resolute break from its former allies in the common struggle against orthodox tradition. Representatives of the orthodox tradition, however, were not prepared to capitulate. Early Buddhist texts are full of incidents about acute disputes between the Buddha and his closest disciples and Brahmaṇic ascetics, who are portrayed as people enjoying great influence and authority. In the *Mahāvagga* (I.23.1), a Brāhmaṇa who had 250 disciples is mentioned; the *Majjhima-Nikāya* (II.22-29) refers to 700 followers; in the *Jātakas*, ascetics with 500 and more disciples are mentioned.

While in Magadha and Videha the Brāhmaṇic organisations were relatively weak, in other areas (primarily in the west) they had numerous supporters. Even in the Ganges Valley (and it was there that the cities were considered most suitable for the Buddha's *Nirvāṇa*), according to the Buddhist canon, there were some fifty Brāhmaṇas—contemporaries of the Buddha—who headed considerable groups of ascetics. The texts of the Canon refer to Brāhmaṇas whose main wealth was knowledge and moral purity, who led a pious life and always offered in sacrifice not sacred cows but grain, fruit and oil. The Buddhists admitted that they enjoyed considerable influence, especially those who carried out sacerdotal functions, offered rich sacrifices, and lived at rulers' courts as councillors or spiritual teachers.

In opposing the Brāhmaṇas' claims to exclusiveness by virtue of their birth and status, Buddhism asserted that all *varṇas* had a similar origin and that originally the difference between them was merely professional.[11] In doing so, contemporary Brāhmaṇas were contrasted with old ones, portrayed as custodians of good old traditions. Such a method, whereby not all Brāhmaṇas were condemned in general, but only those who were "depraved" who had destroyed the good old traditions, was a way of expressing the opposition on the part of early Buddhism to orthodox Brāhmaṇism. The Buddha gave the orthodox followers a chance of rectifying their blunders and of gaining new horizons on condition that they would become his followers. This was an attempt to draw the Brāhmaṇas nearer to the Śramaṇas and, so to speak, to make them "dissolve" among the latter. It is probable that this stand had had an influence on the religious policy of

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Aśoka, who called for respect for the Brahmaṇas and the Śramaṇas.

Buddhist texts often emphasise the Buddha's efforts to convert dissenters "to his creed". According to the *Mahāvagga* (I.20.17-24), a thousand Brāhmaṇic ascetics joined the community. Conversion does not always seem to have been achieved by peaceful means. The same source contains a story of how some noble citizens of Rājagṛha protested against a mass assembly of the *saṅgha* by members of their families (I.24.5). The Brāhmaṇas condemned outright those who had met the Buddha and talked with him. In the *Dīgha-Nikāya* (I.III-112), there is a story about a rich and influential Brāhmaṇa, Sonadaṇḍa, from Campā, who, despite his co-religionists' protests, visited the Buddha and even invited him and his monks to partake of a meal. He apologised for being unable to give the Buddha the honours he deserved in the presence of other Brāhmaṇas.

Striving to build up politically powerful associations, the kings and military aristocrats supported "heretical teachers", for they regarded them as allies against the Brahmaṇic *varṇa*. Buddhism was particularly widespread in towns.[12] In Magadha, the main support for the Buddha and his closest disciples was given by rich Vaiśyas, who became *upāsakas*, lay followers of the Buddha. There he found a great number of followers both from among Brahmaṇists and adherents of other reformational doctrines. According to the *Mahāvagga*, in Rājagṛha the Buddha's supporters were joined by 250 adherents of Sañjaya Beḷiathiputta, one of the six chief "heretical teachers".[13]

A special importance of Magadha in the history of early Buddhism is obvious from the fact that many Buddhist texts were written in Māgadhī. It was there that the "Buddhist elite" mostly came from.[14]

The new doctrine, which had a pronounced practical bias, stressing the importance of the individual and relating his destiny with his own deeds, and which opposed the insurmountable caste barriers and favoured the equality of people from birth, attracted large sections of the population including the Kṣatriyas, who were concentrating in their hands ever increasing power, but were under a strong ideological pressure from the Brāhmaṇas.

Despite all the considerable changes in the socio-economic development of India of that time and the resulting importance

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of property status at the expense of noble birth, the appeal for the elimination of *varṇa* distinctions was, of course, utopian. Moreover, it could have raised resolute protests not only from the Brāhmaṇas and the Kṣatriyas but, evidently, from the Vaiśyas as well. The Buddha was not, and could not be, a social reformer, and his doctrine was not destined to bring about any social change. It is no accident that the principle of the equality of the *varṇas* was proclaimed only for those joining the *saṅgha*. Even Buddhist monks had their divisions according to their past *varṇa* association. Inside the community there existed its own élite.

Buddhist texts repeatedly stress the benefits of the republican form of government, but they do not reject a monarchical system. Buddhism favoured strong political power. It also reckoned with the new economic conditions : in his preachings the Buddha advised kings to provide agriculturists with grain and cattle-raisers with fodder for their cattle, to support tradesmen with money, and to take care of those in the royal service.

For the poorer sections of the population, joining the Buddhist community meant an improvement of their condition. Monks were always provided with boarding and lodging. According to the *Vinaya* (I.77), "they eat good fare and lie in beds protected from the wind". In the *Sāmaññaphala-Sūtta* of the *Dīgha-Nikāya* (I.51-61), a conversation between the Magadha king, Ajātasattu, and the Buddha is recounted. The former asked whether the life of equestrians, cooks, barbers, servants and other members of lower castes would change after they became monks. The Buddha replied that those people would live like kings. He was doubtlessly guided by a desire to emphasise the advantages of monastic life and to increase the host of his followers, but at the same time he realised that striving for better conditions of life was one of the reasons why hired labourers, very poor agriculturists, impoverished villagers, etc. renounced worldly life.

Buddhism was concerned about the economic condition of its lay followers. The Buddha condemned those who had lost property because of indolence and dwelt at length on the causes which more often than not led to loss of property and wealth.[15] This stand could apparently be explained by a wish to win over wealthy supporters who could give generous gifts to the *saṅgha*.

The sphere of influence of the new teaching was enlarged by admitting free members of all *varṇas* to the Buddhist community.

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For those who did not or could not joint the *saṅgha* there was always a hope of attaining "the next good birth". This was the ideal that the Buddha held up to laymen.

Early Buddhism laid the main emphasis on the ethical aspect : sophisticated metaphysical problems were not raised in the preachings addressed to laymen.

The success of Buddhism in the period of its formation was largely due to the fact that it did not call for abolition of traditions and customs which were deeply rooted in social and spiritual life but offered its own explanation of many established and well-known norms. Even in the Mauryan period it remained in essence a purely Indian or, more precisely, North-Indian phenomenon. Many of its doctrines, were based on existing traditions.

The spirit of tolerance in Buddhism was expressed, in particular, in its view that giving presents to worthy representatives of other religious sects was justified.[16]

For ages the ancient Indians had "depended" on the Brāhmaṇas, who "knew the secrets of the magic force" and performed various ceremonies. Buddhism in fact came out against this indispensability of the Brāhmaṇas and against the omnipotence of the secret *mantras*, by professing its desire to make the lives of the Indians easier and simpler.

The spread of the new creed was greatly facilitated by the fact that it was not linked with any specific language and, therefore, with any specific area. This is clearly seen from the *Majjhima-Nikāya* (III.235), which states that it is necessary to use words understandable in every region, i.e. the doctrine could be spread in different dialects instead of using only sacred Sanskrit formulas which were hardly comprehensible to the broad sections of the people. Thus the Buddha also championed a kind of language tolerance.

A distinct feature of the Buddhist religious and philosophical system was that it laid no claims to being orthodox. Let us emphasise that, compared with the Mediterranean religious teachings, ancient Indian doctrines were more tolerant. And yet, there existed various shades in that general trend. The very character of the *Upaniṣads* ruled out a claim to uniqueness of the revelation; however, their actual heirs—the spreaders of the

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Brāhmaṇic tradition—used even that thesis as the basis for sectarian arrogance. The universal nature of the Brāhmaṇic philosophical texts was thus passed off as a proof of an essential superiority of the truth sanctified by ages over systems that owed their origin to the vicissitudes of later epochs (that is how Brāhmaṇists of the time described Jainism and Buddhism).

Early Buddhist texts are free from a tendency of this kind, although, as is well hnown, Buddhism consolidated its position in competition with other doctrines. To some extent, this was associated with the esoteric nature of the teaching itself. What was expressed in words was merely a fraction of the "real truth", a fraction which the adepts could grasp, for the profundity of the whole truth was unfathomable and could not be expressed in words. The precepts recorded in the texts were not labelled as the only correct ones for achieving the religious goal. The Buddha called upon his disciples to comply with his injunctions but his appeal was not categorical and other methods were not forbidden. Later the Buddhists to some extent departed from this principle; nevertheless even later Buddhism is justly considered to be a most tolerant religious movement. This trait of the new teaching ensured its rapid spread among the various sections of the Indian population but, on the other hand, it was the cause of its subsequent weakness, since the Buddhist elements proper became "dissolved" among the multitude of various creeds, which on the threshold of the Middle Ages united under the aegis of a transformed Brāhmaṇism.

Valuable data for the study of spiritual (and, in particular, religious) life of India in the early Mauryan age are provided by fragments from Megasthenes, which also make it possible to verify the evidence of local sources. The Seleucid ambassador and the classical authors who borrowed from his evidence succeeded in grasping some traits of the ideological evolution of the country: the existence of two basic trends—the orthodox trend and the reformation movement, as they grouped the ancient Indian philosophers into Brāhmaṇas and Śramaṇas (*brahmanai, sarmanai*).[17] According to a later tradition, each of the two constituted *airesis* "trend, sect, teaching" ("philosophers are divided into two trends").[18] A very interesting explanation of the "Brāhmaṇa—Śramaṇa" opposition has been preserved here, too. While the former were linked by their common origin and inherited

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their profession of priests of one and the same religious teaching, the latter constituted a different group *genos* comprising members of a wide variety of tribes (ranks, castes—*ethnos*).[19] This evidence, which gives a fairly correct formulation of the principles of formation of the orthodox and Śramaṇa sects, has parallels in Indian sources. Close parallels are found in Strabo's data (XV.I.60) relating to Śramaṇas. He stresses that it was the Śramaṇas who were consulted by kings wishing to better understand the causes of what was happening in the world (cf. the Indian data on Śramaṇas in the kings' service). In a report, ascribed to the monk Bardesanes (2nd century), who is said to have met Indians going to Syria and to have learned from them about their religions,[20] it is stated that the abodes and the sacred sites of the Śramaṇas had been given to them by the king[21] and that they passed the whole day in discoursing on gods[22] (cf. the data on the donations to different unorthodox sects, etc.). Strabo speaks of a special group of Śramaṇas—soothsayers and exorcists, wandering from village to village and from town to town and begging for alms[23] (cf. the data on the vagrant ascetics, Ājīvikas, who had a reputation as soothsayers).

The story about Pramnai, told by Strabo (XV.I.70), evidently refers to the Śramaṇas : "The Pramnai are philosophers opposed to the Brachmanes, and are contentious and fond of argument. They ridicule the Brahmanes who study physiology and astronomy as fools and impostors"[24] (McCrindle's translation). This is an amazingly exact picture of the situation which existed at the time of the appearance of Śramaṇa schools. "Heretics" really opposed themselves to the Brāhmaṇas, ridiculed them, fought against the idea of their exclusiveness, divine merits and deserts. They came out against the haughtiness of the Brāhmaṇas, their confidence in their right to teach the community and put everybody on the path of righteousness. In Buddhist texts, and in the *Dīgha-Nikāya* in particular (III.84), these pretensions are declared as groundless, misleading and false (*musa*), In the *Tevijja-Sũtta* (XIII.5), the Buddha compares Brāhmaṇas with blind men who preach what they do not see and do not know: "The words of these Brāhmaṇas are absurd (*hassaka*), void (senseless, *rittaka*) and useless (*tucchaka*), and become idle talk (*nāmaka*)."

Classical authors have preserved an account, evidently

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stemming from Megasthenes, of a group of nude ascetics among the Śramaṇas (cf. the data on the *digambaras*, the Jain ascetics who went naked).

In fragments reliably ascribed to the Seleucid ambassador, there are no explicit references to Buddhists, though followers of this creed were in all probability included among Śramaṇas. It is likely that at the time of Megasthenes' stay in India, Brāhmaṇism still enjoyed a great influence, and the sects opposing it were still perceived as an undivided whole : none of the unorthodox trends had yet gained so much power as to be specially mentioned by a foreigner. It is noteworthy, however, that Clemens Alexandrinus (150-220 A.D.), in rendering more ancient evidence on the poilosophers, wrote : "Among the Indians are those philosophers who follow the precepts of Boutta, whom they honour as a god, on account of his extraordinary majesty."[25]

It is not surprising that here the followers of the Buddha are mentioned separately. As we know from the Indian sources, Buddhism had become a major force in the spiritual life of ancient Indian society by Mauryan times. The Buddhist community, the *saṅgha*, had already taken shape, the basic texts were being brought together into a single canon and, as legend has it, two councils had already been convened to discuss the doctrine and the organisation of the *saṅgha*.

Gradually, Buddhism was becoming more and more widespread. This was promoted both by Aśoka's policy and, more so by the objective factors of socio-economic and political development : the unification of the empire, the development of trade and crafts, the growth of towns and the increased influence of the middle strata of the population—the Vaiśyas. With its opposition to exclusiveness derived from birth, to narrow caste and territorial restraints, and with its call for a united empire headed by a "ruler of the land", Buddhism was the most suitable ideological foundation in the period of the formation of a centralised empire.[26] Brāhmaṇism with its sanctification of tribal fragmentation was no longer adequate to the needs of the new epoch.

It is noteworthy that the Buddhist concept of the *cakravartin*, "the pious monarch", was in general similar to Kauṭilya's theory of strengthening the power of a mighty king-autocrat at the helm of state. The new creed had apparently imbibed many ideas popular at the time, thus reflecting many aspects of the ideological,

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political and social life of that time.

According to the early Buddhist texts, the *cakravartin* ought to rule justly, enforce order, defend his subjects, conduct a successful foreign policy and spread his power to all the four corners of the world. It was his duty to protect the traditional *varṇa* structure and to support the members of various groups of free citizens, first of all, the Kṣatriyas. This was a clear demonstration of the Buddhists' attitude towards the caste system as a whole and of the changed political and social conditions that had led to the elevation of the military. On the other hand, the pious monarch was also obliged to protect the Brāhmaṇas and, finally, to look after the people's morals and strengthen them. This code, while differing from the Brāhmaṇic injunctions to the righteous king, for the concept of "Dharma" was understood differently in Buddhism and Brāhmaṇism, nevertheless conformed to the general traditions of the time and was not directed against any other religious trends. The concept of the *cakravartin* was reflected in Aśoka's edicts. There are reasons to believe that it influenced the political ideas of the Mauryan epoch.[27]

2 Buddhism and Aśoka's Religious Policy

Legend links Aśoka's name with the strengthening of Buddhism not only in India but also beyond it. The evidence of the Buddhist texts has been confirmed by epigraphy, including the inscriptions recently discovered in modern Afghanistan. However, despite the abundant data contained in the sources, scholars are hardly unanimous in their interpretation of such major issues as Aśoka's religious affiliation, his policy, the Dharma of the edicts, etc. The available data provide ample grounds to assert that the emperor had embraced Buddhism, though they diverge in their description of the fact, its causes and date.[28]

Aśoka's inscriptions make it possible to trace a certain evolution of his attitude to Buddhism and the Buddhist community. In the Minor Rock Edict he declared : "It is (now somewhat) more than two and a half years that I have been *upāsaka*, but I have not been very zealous [in the field of Buddhism]. It is (now somewhat) more than a year that I have visited the *saṅgha* and I have been very zealous."[29] Some authors believe that the

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Minor Rock Edicts are the latest of Aśoka's edicts. They interpret *saṃghe upeti* (*saṃgham upagate*) as an indication that the emperor had joined the community and believe that he had abdicated towards the end of his reign and had become a monk.[30] This interpretation met with serious opposition. According to E. Hultzsch, the edicts were issued in the first period of Aśoka's reign.[31] The same viewpoint was expressed by Eggermont, who dated the Minor Rock Edict from the tenth regnal year or even earlier.[32] Judging by their contents, they were written earlier than the Major Rock Edicts, which, as shown by their text, were issued eleven years after the coronation.[33] This justifies the conclusion that Aśoka adopted the status of *upāsaka* in the first period of his reign, which agrees with written monuments of Northern and Southern Buddhism.

Moreover, scholars have offered a new interpretation of *saṃghe upeti* as "visiting the community",[34] which agrees with the general contents of the inscriptions and with Buddhist tradition relating to Aśoka.

Ceylonese chronicles and Buddhaghoṣa mention that Bindusāra supported orthodox Brāhmaṇism. Buddhaghoṣa says that at first "Aśoka, like his father, was an adherent of Brāhmaṇism" (*brāhmaṇa-bhatto*).[35] Judging by the *Samantapāsādikā*, Aśoka patronised not only Brāhmaṇic but also other heretical (from Buddhaghoṣa's viewpoint) sects for three years after his coronation.[36] Having got acquainted with the life and behaviour of the Ājīvikas, Jainas[37] and vagrant ascetics, Aśoka became convinced that their teachings were imperfect and their activities were wrong.[38] According to Indian sources, it was at this time that he met the Buddhist monk, Nigrodha, under whose influence he became a disciple of Buddha[39] and extended his special patronage to Buddhists. Ceylonese chronicles and the *Samantapāsādikā* tell how Aśoka had visited the *saṅgha*[40] and tried to comprehened the principles of the Buddha's teaching.[41] The same is reported in the *Dīpavaṃsa* (VI.58). Aśoka said to Nigrodha : "I want to see the community and I will honour as many bhikṣus as will have assembled, and I will listen to the teaching of the Buddha" *ichchhāmi saṃgharatanassa dassanaṃ samāgamaṃ sannipatanti yāvatā abhivādayāni suṇāmi dhammaṃ*). According to the Buddhist texts, Aśoka's visit to the community took place in the same year as the adoption of the new creed, but

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judging by his inscription, this was a year later.[42] The sources also speak of a gradual growth of the emperor's interest in Buddhism and the position of the *saṅgha*, of the founding of the monastery, Aśokārāma, and the building of 84,000 *vihāras*. It is noteworthy that both southern and northern traditions agree that the construction began after Aśoka's visit to the local community (monastery).[43] From the Major Rock Edicts we know about his worship of the Bodhi tree,[44] and from the Minor Rock Edicts, about his pilgrimage to the holy places of Buddhism[45] and about his visit, twenty years after the coronation, to the village where the Buddha was born, etc.

Many authors believe that the reason for Aśoka's conversion to Buddhism was the horrors of the sanguinary war against Kaliṅga,[46] since in the XIIIth Rock Edict the emperor expresses his repentance. According to the *Sāmantapāsādikā*, he became a follower of the Buddha in his fourth regnal years; the Ceylonese chronicles date this event from the eighth year (on the expiry of seven years). The chronicles also report that Nigrodha, who was born in the year of Aśoka's coronation, became a monk at the age of seven and converted the king to Buddhism. According to the XIIIth Edict, the Kaliṅga war began eight years after the coronation of the emperor. This gave P.H.L. Eggermont grounds to suppose that the conversion to the new faith occurred before the Kaliṅga war.[47]

Both northern and southern traditions do not connect the preceding facts. The *Divyāvadāna*, for example, tells that the Buddhist monk, Samudra, was once thrown into jail, built by Aśoka in Pāṭaliputra, where horrible tortures were practised. Samudra endured all tortures with remarkable fortitude and the king, astonished at his courage, became a follower of Buddhism.[48] The source contains no mention of any war.

It should be borne in mind that the XIIIth Major Rock Edict was issued several years after the war, so that there is a considerable time-gap between it and the official announcement of repentance. It is interesting that the Minor Rock Edicts say nothing about the war and the repentance. Following E. Hultzsch, who dates them even from the tenth year after the coronation, it is reasonable to suppose that Aśoka became an *upāsaka* in his eighth regnal year, and, consequently, before the military operations in Kaliṅga.[49] These operations seem to have begun in

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the period when Aśoka "was not very zealous". The second period, linked with his visit to the *saṅgha*, might have really occurred under the influence of the war, but most likely he had become a follower of the Buddha before it.[50] The XIIIth Edict contains no reference to any sudden change of the emperor's outlook after the Kaliṅga events; he did not announce his adoption of a new religion but merely stressed the need for developing the basic principles of the *Dharma* set forth earlier. The king's declaration of his repentance can thus be interpreted as an attempt to strengthen the ideological effect of his embracing Buddhism. Therefore D. Bhandarkar's view that Aśoka held a status intermediate between an *upāsaka* and a bhikśu-monk (*bhikhugatika*) seems debatable. The scholar came to this conclusion by interpreting the evidence of the visit to the *saṅgha* as an indication of Aśoka's temporary stay in the community as a monk.[51] However, the fact is that in all his edicts, even those which are Buddhist in spirit, he speaks only as a ruler and "there is nowhere the slightest suggestion as to his withdrawal from the world".[52]

Misinterpreting the emperor's inscriptions and confusing his personal views with the principles of the Maurya policy as a whole, some researchers believed that Aśoka was a Brāhmaṇist and not a Buddhist.[63] The opinion has also been expressed that Aśoka was an adherent of Jainism.[54] And indeed, the edicts contain no detailed exposition of the Buddhist doctrine and they never mention its basic concepts such as *Nirvāṇa*, the Four Noble Truths, the Eightfold Path; on the contrary, they contain precepts of Brāhmaṇism too (in particular, the concept of the *svarga* and the concept of *ṛṇa*). It should be borne in mind, however, that the main point in the inscriptions is not an exposition of the principles of Buddhism but of *Dharma* and the methods of spreading it. It is quite but natural that, in outlining the principles of pious behaviours, Aśoka could make use of some well-known traditional ideas of Brāhmaṇism, which had still retained considerable importance in that period. However, all this does not disprove the view that the emperor was a follower of Buddhism.[55]

G. Bühler's point about the importance of Brāhmaṇic literature for an analysis of the edicts seems justified; however, one can hardly agree with his negative attitude towards the interpretation of some words and terms from a Buddhist viewpoint.[56] The

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existence or absence of certain Buddhist terms cannot serve as a determinative argument in interpreting the inscriptions. Therefore, it is hardly expedient be proceed from the premise that the edicts reflect an early stage in the development of Buddhism when many of the major philosophical concept of its doctrine had not yet been elaborated.[57]

The Buddhist sources on which we have to draw specially, emphasise that Aśoka's conversion did not occur at once : only after he had become acquainted with the teachings of numerous schools, did he reject them as "having no inner sense and content" (*n'atthi tesam anto sāro*). Undoubtedly, the Buddhists who were concerned with the strengthening of their system to the detriment of other doctrines, including some heterodox ones, had obviously gone out of their way to contrast them with one another, stressing the superiority of their own creed. But the same accounts may serve as evidence of an acute rivalry among different non-orthodox schools during Aśoka's reign and their attempts to secure the support of the state. The situation could hardly have changed drastically after the king had become a pious *upāsaka*. The position of Buddhism had certainly been considerably reinforced, but other "heretic schools" had not lost their influence.

The VIIth Pillar Edict contains important data on the religious trends of Aśoka's time. In it, the Buddhists (the Buddhist community) are singled out, and then are listed those who, as it were, opposed Buddhism—the Brāhmaṇas, the Ājīvikas and the Jainas. The Brahmaṇas and the Ājīvikas are mentioned together[58] while the Jainas are listed among other sects (whose names are not given). It may be supposed that the order in which the names appear reflected the position of these religious trends in Aśoka's time and the intensity of their rivalry with Buddhism. Both the Brāhmaṇas[59] and the Ājīvikas continued to play an important part at that time. The *Mahāvaṃsa* (X. 101-102) contains an interesting report on the appearance of the Ājīvikas in Ceylon. King Paṇḍukābhaya, a grandson of Devānāṃpiya Tissa, who was a friend of Aśoka, even built a special abode (*ājīvikānaṃ geham*) for them in the island's capital. The Buddhist text, the *petavatthu* (IV. 3.57), speaks of the considerable prestige enjoyed by the Ājīvikas in Saurāṣṭra. According to the *Divyāvadāna*, they were numerous in Puṇḍravardhana in Aśoka's reign. Apparently, it was

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no accident that the king and later his grandson, Daśaratha, granted caves to them.

Judging by the emperor's inscriptions, the relations between the various sects were quite peaceful and friendly. However, those were royal edicts, whose aim was to impress on the population the idea of the efficient policy pursued by the state. The real situation was quite different from that portrayed in the edicts.

Realising that the struggle between sects and creeds and the enmity between the adherents of different religions were bound to weaken the empire and reduce the social base of the Mauryas, Aśoka practised religious tolerance, thus continuing the policy of his predecessor. The Mauryas had always shown interest in various ideological trends. According to Jaina tradition, Candragupta became a Jaina ascetic in the last years of his life, although he was undoubtedly acquainted with the tenets of our religions as well. Athenaeus asserted that Candragupta had cemented his alliance with Seleucus by marrying the latter's daughter. These accounts are unlikely to be true of fact but there is no doubt that close contacts between the Indian king and the Hellenistic rulers were bound to have an impact on the general atmosphere prevailing at the court. The sources contain reports on the privileged position of the representative of the sect of the Ājīvikas under Bindusāra, who also patronised the Brāhmaṇas and wanted to get a sophist from Antiochus, etc.

In Taxila, where Indian and Western cultural elements came into contact, prince Aśoka stayed for a long time,[60] which must also have influenced the formation of the Mauryan emperor's outlook. The XIIth Major Rock Edict sets forth clearly the principles of Aśoka's religious policy : "the king Piyadasi, the Beloved of the Gods, respects all sects whether ascetics or householders, and he honours them with gifts and honours of various kinds. But the Beloved of the Gods does not value gifts and reverence as (he sees the main thing) in development of the basic principles (*sāra*) of the teachings of all sects (*savapāsaṃḍānam*)."[61] Aśoka strove to reconcile the sects rather than to aggravate their conflicts. "Let an alien sect also be respected on every occasion. If this is done, one's own sect is developed and the competitive sect is helped. If the contrary is done, one's own sect is destroyed and the other sect harmed."[62]

Possible disputes, polemics and even censure were not

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rejected, but at the same time it was emphasised that "condemnation of an alien sect should not be without a cause, and even when necessary, should be moderate."

While at the very beginning of his reign Aśoka, according to Buddhaghoṣa, rejected the doctrines of the Ājīvikas, the Jainas and vagrant ascetics as devoid of inner content (*sāra*), in the edicts he came out in favour of the elaboration of the basic principles (*sāra*) of these doctrines. This reversal was evidently due to his changed religious affiliation. Having become a supporter of the Buddha's teaching and having understord the importance of contacts with representatives of other non-orthodox trends, which were still quite influential at the time, Aśoka embarked on a policy of religious tolerance. First and foremost a statesman, he understood the importance of controlling the life and activity of the sects and gave them much attention. "I have appointed," the VIIth Major Pilliar Edict reads, "*Dharmamahāmātras* concerned with the affairs of the *saṅgha*, likewise concerned with the Brāhmaṇas and the Ājīvikas too. They have also been appointed for the Nirgzanthas (Jainas) and various (other) sects (*nānā pāsaṃḍesu.*) In accordance with the special features of each of them, separate *mahāmātras* [have been appointed]."[63]

The contents of the edicts quoted above are interesting in many ways. It is easy to see that the trends and sects different from Buddhism are described by the term *pāsaṃḍa* (whereas in relation to Buddhism the term *saṃgha* is used. By this word (*Pāli pāsaṇḍa*, Skr. *pāsaṇḍa*), representatives of the reformation schools were understood in orthodox tradition. In general, this term was applied to heretics. The Buddhists designated their rivals by it. In the inscriptions, however, *pāsaṃḍa* conveyed no negative connotations, but had neutral nuance of meaning, which testified to Aśoka's desire to establish harmonious relations among various religious groups. This is confirmed by the Greek version of the closing part of the XIIth and the beginning of the XIIIth Major Rock Edicts (the inscription from Kandahar), where the word *pāsaṃḍa* corresponds to the Greek which among other meanings, had the meaning "sect", "philosophical school".[64]

Naturally, Aśoka's tolerance extended first and foremost to sects that assumed an anti-Brāhmaṇic attitude. Although the Buddhists had very sharp disputes with other "reformers", they in fact presented a united front to the orthodox creed.

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Nevertheless, paying tribute to tradition, the emperor listed "respect for the Brāhmaṇas" among the indispensable conditions of the "righteous behaviour and way of living", which, however, can in no way be regarded as an infringement of the rights of the reformation sects.[65]

In the VIIIth Major Rock Edict, meetings between the king and Brāhmaṇas and Śramaṇas during his tours of the country are mentioned.[66] The phrase "Brāhmaṇas and Śramaṇas" which occurs in the inscriptions was no innovation of Aśoka's. It was a formula used in many ancient Indian texts (including Buddhist texts).[67] Even the Magadha king, Ajātasattu, well known as a patron of the *saṅgha*, and other ancient Indian rulers urged respect for the Brāhmaṇas. So in this, too, Aśoka followed the established norms, stressing his loyalty to the "ancient rule" (*porāṇāpakiti*).

The policy of toleration combined with skilful control of the activity of various religious sects enabled the emperor to avoid an open conflict between them and, at the same time to strengthen Buddhism, which, however, had not become an official religion at the time.

In view of a large number of sects then existing in India, making Buddhism an official religion and suppressing all other, even hostile, trends would have led to sharp clashes and would have first of all caused opposition from the Ājīvikas and the Brāhmaṇic section, still very powerful politically and exerting a considerable influence on the spiritual life of society.

Nevertheless, as the sources show, towards the end of his reign Aśoka departed from his policy of religious tolerance, which led to grave consequences.[68] This change of policy might have been forced upon him to some extent and was determined by a sharpening of the Buddhists' struggle against other doctrines. The emperor came to patronise Buddhism more and more openly, actively interfering in the affairs of the *saṅgha*, which at the time was rent asunder by internal discord. In this connection, the "Schism Edict"[69] and the Bhabru edict acquire special significance.

The "Schism Edict" or the "Edict on the Preservation of the Unity of the Community" contains the king's decree instructing that the monks or nuns undermining the unity of the *saṅgha*, should be dressed in white garments and banished from the

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community.[70] "I wish the community and its path to be lasting." This edict was considered to be specially important : its three versions were found in different parts of the country (in Allahabad-Kauśāmbī, Sārnāth and Sānchi). The emperor demanded (the Sārnāth version) that the decree should be widely announced not only to monks and nuns but also to lay adherents of Buddhism (*upāsākas, upāsikās*) and to officials.[71] Moreover, the latter were responsible for making the decree known to the population of their districts and of the most remote areas. Here the king openly advocates the unity of the Buddhist *saṅgha* and attaches to this matter nationwide importance[72] since state officials had been notified of its significance. Some authors, in particular R. Basak, believe that the officials were themselves to banish the dissenters from the communities in all districts of the empire.[73] However, this opinion can hardly be shared. For control over the activity and life of the *saṅgha* did not in itself imply the emperor's right to decide its affairs directly. That right belonged to the community, although the emperor was seeking to strengthen his hold over the *saṅgha* and was already acting as an outspokenly pro-Buddhist ruler rather than as a tolerant one.

The tone of the "Schism Edict" drastically differs from that of the other inscriptions of Aśoka, but the preceding peculiarities can be convincingly explained if we date the edict to the final period of Aśoka's reign,[74] when the king's religious policy had undergone a radical change.

The Bhabru edict should also be dated to the end of Aśoka's reign, notwithstanding the fact that the text of the inscription contains no chronological indication.[75] Aśoka openly declares his devotion to the Buddha, the *Dharma* and the *saṅgha* (*buddhaṣsi dhammassi saṃghassi ti gālave ca prasāde ca*).[76]

In Bhandarkar's opinion, copies of the edict were sent to all large monasteries, although only one copy has survived[77] (it is difficult to say whether this is correct or not, but there can be no doubt that special importance was attached to the edict). The emperor addresses the *saṅgha* with a greeting which is very similar to the more verbose Buddhist formula: "The king of Magadha, Piyadasi, greets the community and wishes it happiness and freedom from care."[78] Further he reaffirms that all that the Buddha had said was truthful, lists a number of works written "to overcome the false teaching", and urges that the monks and the nuns,

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as well as lay Buddhists, study them.[79]

Aśoka appears here as a zealous protector of the *saṅgha*, concerned with the success of the Buddhist doctrine and the well-being of its followers.

The fact that the titles of the Buddhist *sūtras* are mentioned in the Bhabru edict suggests that Buddhist canonical texts already existed at the time and sheds some light on their character. This, in its turn, makes it possible to find an explanation for the choice of any specific text. The latter question is very complicated and bears closely on an analysis of the king's religious policy. First of all, it must be emphasised that Aśoka's advice that the *sūtras* should be listened to was addressed not only to the monks but also to the lay followers of the Buddha's teaching. Besides, the texts mentioned in the edict deal not so much with purely philosophical and metaphysical issues, as with practical and ethical ones (including disciplinary and organisational matters).[80]

The list opens with the *Vinaysamukasa* a part of the *Aṅguttara-Nikāya* (I.98-100)[81] and a sort of eulogy of the *Pratimokṣa*, i.e. it deals with problems of discipline. It will be recalled that such questions were the subject of the discussion at the First and Second Buddhist Councils. According to Buddhaghoṣa, at the First Council the monks came to the conclusion that the *Vinaya* was of prime importance : "The teaching of the Buddha was based upon the *Vinaya* as the endurance of the Dhamma depended on the endurance of the *Vinaya*."[82]

Next comes the *Aliyavasam* (part of the *Dīgha-Nikāya*, III·269.291), which contains the ten rules of a monk's practical life and touches upon the path of spiritual perfection; then the *Upatiszapasina*, which describes the conditions of a monk's righteous life, then the *Lāghulovāde* (the instruction to Rāhula), which tells how sinful lying is. In the *Anāgatabhayam*, the importance of strict adherence to the rules of the *Vinaya* is stressed once again ("O monks, because of defiling of the *Vinaya*, defiling of the *Dharma* occurs").[83] The text contains a warning against those monks who do not seek to hear the "profound and meaningful words of the Buddha" and urges fighting that "menace". Judging by the Ceylonese chronicles, such a menace did exist in the last years of Aśoka's reign.[84]

In the texts listed in the Bhabru edict impious deeds are pointed out and remedies for overcoming them are prescribed.

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It would be logical to think that, out of a multitude of canonical texts, the emperor had selected those which could help him solve the problems that had arisen.

A comparison between the early and the late inscriptions clearly shows the change in the relations between the king and the Buddhist *saṅgha*. In the Minor Rock Edicts, Aśoka emphasises the fact that he had visited the community and speaks of his zeal as an *upāsaka*. In the Major Rock Edicts, he announces the dispatch of *dharmamahāmātras* to the Buddhists, Brāhmaṇas, Ājīvikas, etc. In the inscriptions dated from the end of his reign, Aśoka appears as a ruler interfering personally in the affairs of the community (contrary to some scholars' belief, Aśoka had not become a king-monk).[85]

The evidence of the edicts can be compared with the data of written sources, more particularly, of the Ceylonese chronicles. According to the chronicles, acute internal dissension had arisen in the Buddhist community under Aśoka. The growing popularity of Buddhism and the rise in the number of its followers had led to an increase in the *saṅgha's* revenues, which was bound to have an impact on the position of all other religious trends and sects. To quote the authors of the texts, heretics (lit. "holding other, erroneous views"), had lost their riches and influence (*pahīnalābhasakārā titthiya puthaladdhikā*),[86] and, to improve their fortunes they, like the followers of Śākyamuni, donned yellow vestments, joined the *saṅgha* and came to live together with the *bhikṣu*. "They declared their doctrines to be the Buddha's teaching and carried out the rites the way they wished."[87] The *Dīpavamsa* (VII.38) also mention the Ājīvikas and other heterodox sects (*Ājīvikā aññaladhikā*) who undermined the Buddha's teaching and defiled it by wearing yellow vestments. The pious *bhikṣus* were unable to carry out the rites connected with *uposatha* and *pavāraṇā* for seven years. Even in the Aśokārāma, the royal monastery, the ceremonies of *patimokha* (*pratimokṣa*) were discontinued.

When this became known to the king, he sent a dignitary to the Aśokārāma with the order, that internal discord in the community be resolved and the rites resumed. However, despite this strict order, the Buddhist monks refused to perform the ceremonies of *uposatha* with the heretics. Incensed by their disobedience, the dignitary had some pious monks beheaded. Only

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when he noticed among the *bhikṣus* the emperor's own brother, did he stop the massacre and returned to Aśoka with a report of the events. The saddened emperor hastened to the *saṅgha* to find out who was responsible for all that had happened.

He could not get a clear answer to his questions : the *bhikṣus* were divided on this issue. Some thought that the culprit was the emperor himself, others blamed both the emperor and the official he had sent, and still others saw the cause lying elsewhere. "Only Tissa, Moggali's son, can resolve our doubt," they decided.

As the *Mahāvamsa* recounts, Tissa Moggaliputta, together with his numerous disciples, was at that time on Mount Ahogaṅgā, where he had gone after the heretics had joined the *saṅgha*. The emperor succeeded in persuading Tissa to come back to Pāṭaliputra. For a week the monk explained to Aśoka the essence of the Buddha's teaching (*sikkhāpese mahīpālam sambuddhasamayam*),[88] after which the king went to his *ārāma* and called an assembly (*samnipāta*) of all the *bhikṣus* of the community.[89] According to the *Dīpavamsa* (VII.50), it was attended by 60,000 faithful followers of the Buddha (lit. "sons of the Victor"). Together with Tissa, the emperor asked them questions about the essence of the Buddha's teaching (*kimvādī sugato*). Having grasped the main points of the heretics' doctrines, the king banished the heretics from the *saṅgha* and then addressed the pious monks with the question : "What did the Buddha preach ?" In reply he heard : "He preached the teaching of Vibhajja" (*vibhajjavāda*).[90] Tissa confirmed the correctness of their words and the jubilant king, who believed that the *saṅgha* had been purged of all heresy (*saṅgho visodhito*), went back to his capital, leaving Tissa as the champion of the unity of the *saṅgha* (*therassa bhūpati saṅghassa rakkham datvāna*).[91] Now the *bhikṣus* were able to perform the ceremony of *uposatha*. Tissa, following the example of Mahā-kassapa and Yasa,[92] began preparations for a council (*saṅgiti*). He selected a thousand learned *bhikṣus*, well versed in the three *Piṭakas*, in order to restore the true teaching ("the good law") with their help. At the council Tissa presented his *katthāvatthu* in which he condemned the preachers of hostile teachings (*paravādappamadaṃ*).

Such is the story told by the Ceylonese chronicles. Much of the story seems far-fetched and implausible; however, some of its details, for all the bias of their authors and commentators, who

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were followers of the Southern school of *vibhajjavādins*, deserve close attention. It is noteworthy that these reports find direct analogies in epigraphy.

Various sources suggest that in the Mauryan period there were contradictions not only between the Buddhists and the adherents of other creeds, but inside the Buddhist *saṅgha* as well. It was no longer united, but appeared as a complex organisation, in which clashes occurred between individual groups of monks, and dissent arose over matters relating to the structure of the *saṅgha* and over the doctrine itself. This conclusion (although it differs from the opinion of many scholars who treated the Buddhist community, in the early period of its history, as an integral whole) will not seem unexpected or surprising if one considers certain facts from the history of Buddhism. Tradition has it that back in the Buddha's lifetime there took place events which were indication of internal discords arising in the community. In the *Mahāvagga*, the *Majjhima-Nikāya* and other sources references are found to a clash of two groups of Buddhists in Kauśāṃbī.

The incident involving the Buddha's brother, Devadatta, is a graphic example of feuds among the members of the *saṅgha*. He set himself in opposition to the Buddha and, having won over to his side 500 monks, left for Gayāsīsa accompanied by them. Moreover, he was planning to assassinate the Buddha and (as reported by some Buddhist texts) even made a number of unsuccessful attempts on his brother's life. All this can be regarded as a kind of schism in the community (*saṅghabheda*), although the *Vinaya* does not qualify the events in these terms.[93] The fact that in early Buddhist texts[94] dissent in the community is discussed also shows that it did exist. The conflicts were further aggravated in the late eighties of the 5th century B.C.[95] According to the sources, at the First Buddhist Council, Puraṇa did not support the decisions of the other elders and refused to recognise the Buddha's texts (*Buddhavacana*) quoted by Mahākāśyapa and his followers.[96] The dispute did not subside even after the council at Rājagṛha,[97] and the polemic came to a head at the council in Vaiśālī, convened to discuss some anti-Vinayanist actions undertaken by a group of Vaiśālī monks,[98] who had put forward ten points which they believed to be legitimate despite their non-conformity with the statutes of the *saṅgha*.[99] First, a specially elected council, and

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then all those present at the assembly condemned the doctrine of the Vaiśālī monks. According to Ceylonese chronicles, the latter convened their own council and drew up resolutions in keeping with their own views. This council became known under the name of *Mahāsaṅgha* or *Mahāsaṅgīti*.

Thus, long before the Mauryan period, when the Magadhan throne was held by kings of the Śaiśunāga dynasty, there arose discord in the Buddhist *saṅgha* over matters of organisation and the community's status, primarily over the rules of the *Vinaya*. This discord soon led to a split into two factions—*sthaviras* and *mahāsaṅghikas*—and the polemic over the rules of the *Vinaya* spread into the sphere of the doctrine itself. Tradition links this development with the name of Mahādeva, a Mathura monk, who advanced the five points concerning the essence of an *arhat*.[100]

It was the heresy of Mahādeva that led to final split in the *saṅgha* and gave an impetus to the formation of new sects (schools) inside Buddhism. Soon their number was to reach eighteen. They advanced their own doctrines and interpretations of the original teaching.[101]

While the history of the Vaiśālī Council and the events that led to its convocation are described in the sources at length, Mahādeva's activity is recorded only in northern tradition, just as data on the Third Buddhist Council under Aśoka have reached us only through the Pāli texts of Ceylon. The sources differ as to when Mahādeva's campaign began and the split of the *saṅgha* into the *sthaviras* and the *mahāsanghikas* took place, but nevertheless these events can safely be assumed to date from the time immediately preceding the Mauryan period.

The gradual democratisation of the Buddhist community, the loosening of its rigid organisational standards, the emergence of diverse sects and schools which advanced their own interpretations of the original teaching and the rules of the *Vinaya*, and the migration of followers of these schools and sects to various regions of India—all this undermined the former unity of the *saṅgha* and led to the emergence of protagonists of different schools in Buddhist monasteries. It is quite probable that members of other sects, heretical from the standpoint of the most orthodox doctrine of Theravāda, began to gain admission to the Aśokārāma. This ruled out any joint performance of religious ceremonies, including the *uposatha*, as mentioned in the Ceylonese chronicles.

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It is also noteworthy that, even in the period preceding Aśoka's rule, royal power was not indifferent towards what was happening in the community. The preceding facts make it possible to conform to reports, in the southern tradition, of sharp conflicts in the Buddhist community under Aśoka, of the clashes between the Buddhists and other heterodox sects and of the king's attempt for the unity of the *saṅgha*, all the more so since that evidence is corroborated by the northern tradition and, what is most important, by epigraphy.

In the "Aśokāvadāna of the *Divyāvadāna* open revolts against the Buddhists in Puṇḍravardhana and Pāṭaliputra are mentioned. The instigators of the outrages, Ājīvikas, were murdered together with other opponents of the Buddha's teaching. The source reports that the emperor's own brother, Vītāśoka, a faithful follower of Buddhism, was beheaded by accident. This prompted the emperor to take action and put an end to the bloodshed. According to the Chinese version of the text, the instigators were not Ājīvikas but Nirgranthas. Many of them were also killed. Here, too, a special role of the king's brother is mentioned : he was mistaken for a follower of the Nirgranthas and murdered. After that the king issued a special decree forbidding the killing of Śramaṇas. Northern tradition, which refers to bloody clashes between the Buddhists and non-Buddhists, evidently reflected real conflicts in the ideological sphere.

Although A.L. Basham is inclined to regard the evidence of northern Buddhist tradition as quite incredible,[102] the *Divyāvadāna* evidence regarding the conflicts between Aśoka and members of non-Buddhist sects, as has been mentioned before, can be due to a change in the king's religious policy in the last years of his reign. In both cases, the source speaks of an intervention by royal power to settle the conflicts (it is interesting that the emperor's brother appears both in the southern and northern traditions). There is, however, an important difference between the southern Pāli and the northern traditions :[103] while southern tradition's story about the clashes between orthodox Buddhists and their opponents serve as a kind of introduction to the subsequent events (the purge of the *saṅgha* and the convocation of the Third Buddhist Council) the northern tradition does not mention the council. This difference, which is undoubtedly not accidental, must be taken into account in determining the historicity of the

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Third Buddhist Council in Pāṭaliputra.

On the whole, a number of similarities can be traced between the narrative and epigraphic data :

1. The edict's report on the need to expel the schismatics from the community (after making them put on white garments) agrees with the data of the Burmese[104] as well as of the Ceylonese sources.[105] A direct parallel is also found in Buddhaghoṣa.[106]

2. The evidence of the *Mahāvaṃsa* (V. 274) and Buddhaghoṣa (*Sam.*, I. 61) on cleansing the community and restoring its unity (*saṅgho samaggo hutvāna*) is exactly similar to the data of the "Schism Edict" *saṁghe samage kaṭe* (in Buddhaghoṣa, *samaggo saṅgho*).

The version from Sanchi warrants the supposition that the edict was published after the split in the *saṅgha*, when the unity of the community had been restored and the heretics and dissenters expelled from it. "The community of monks and nuns have been united (*samage kaṭe*) and this unity should last for as long as my sons and great grandsons and the Sun and Moon."

3. The chronicles (*Mahāvaṃsa*) and Buddhaghoṣa link the carrying out of *uposatha* with the restoration of the unity of the community (V. 724—*saṅgho samaggo hutvāna tadākasi uposatham*); in Buddhaghoṣa (I. 62), *samaggo saṅgho sannipatitvā uposatham akāsi.*

In the "Schism Edict" *uposatha* is also spoken of : "And in the days of *uposatha* let *upāsakas* also come and be acquainted with the edict. And let every *mahāmātra* arrive in the days of uposatha to get acquainted with this order and to understand its purport"—the version from Sarnath. Discussing the terminology of the *Vinaya* in connection with an analysis of the "Schism Edict", H. Bechert arrived at the conclusion that the pharse *saṁghe samage kaṭe* in the edict of Aśoka was evidence that a *saṅgha* (each particular community) could follow the injunctions of the *Vinaya* fully and perform various ceremonies including *uposatha*).[107]

4. It is noteworthy that both the *Dīpavaṁsa* (VII. 53) and the Edict are unanimous in representing Aśoka as the champion of unity.

The preceding points of similarity between the chronicles and epigraphy are very important for establishing the factuality of the

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events that took place in the Mauryan epoch. Schematically some of the similarities can be represented as follows :

Southern tradition (*Mahāvṣṃsa*)	Northern tradition (*Aśokāvadāna*)	Tārānātha	Edicts
Clashes between the Buddhists and the "heterodoxes", tension in the *saṅgha*	Clashes between the Buddhists and the Ājīvikas	—	Tension in the *saṅgha*
Intervention of royal power, punishment of the schismatics	Intervention of royal power, punishment of the schismatics. Destruction and resurrection of the Bodhi tree	—	Intervention of royal power
Assembly of the community monks	Pañcavarṣa	Pañcavarṣa	Assembly of the community
Purge of the community and restoration of its unity (banishment of monks dressed in white garments, according to Buddhaghoṣa)	—	—	Purge of the community and restoration of its unity. The needs to expel monks, dressed in white garments
Council under Moggaliputta Tissa	—	—	—

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The table shows that the major events, which, in the opinion of the authors of the Ceylonese chronicles, led to the convening of the council, have been reflected in the sources of different traditions and even of different types. This gives one grounds to believe that the events really took place.

But how should the report of the Ceylonese tradition about the Third Buddhist Council in Pāṭaliputra be interpreted in this light ? It goes without saying that the factuality of the events that preceded it, cannot serve as an argument in support of its historicity. In solving this problem, two points recorded in the chronicles seem particularly noteworthy : the assembly of the community under Aśoka and the council convened by Moggaliputta Tissa and held under his guidance.

According to the *Mahāvaṃsa*, for instance, on the seventh day after the Buddhist monks had been slain by the king's dignitary, the emperor arrived at his monastery and called a full assembly of the *bhikṣu* community. At this crowded gathering (*bhikkhusaṅghassa samnipāta*) Aśoka came to understand the real teaching of the Buddha. There, heretical doctrines were defined and their adepts were expelled from the community. After purging the community (*saṅgho visodhito*), Aśoka appointed Tissa protector of the *saṅgha* and returned to his capital. Some time later, Tissa selected a thousand educated monks and convened a council, at which the "Noble Law" was adopted. Hence, even the chronicles (first of all the most ancient of them—the *Dīpavaṃsa*)—reporting on the council in Pāṭaliputra (this tradition was drawn upon by Buddhaghoṣa and the authors of later works of the southern cycle)—clearly distinguish between two events : the assembly of the Buddhist community under Aśoka, at which the essence of the Buddha's teaching and the community's unity were discussed, and the council under the guidance of Moggaliputta Tissa, at which the latter presented his *Kathāvatthu*.[108]

This difference has also been expressed in terminology : the assembly under Aśoka is called *saṅghassa saṃnipāta* and the council convened by Tissa, *saṅgīti*. In the southern tradition the latter term is applied to the first and second Councils.[109] A comparison of the sources shows that the evidence of the chronicles relating to the assembly of the community corresponds with the data of the northern tradition on the *pañcavarṣa* under Aśoka, which makes it possible to link the data of the southern tradition

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on *saṅghassa samnipāta* with that of the *Aśokāvadāna*, the *Aśokāvadānamālā* and Tārānātha on *pañcavarṣa* (*pañcavarṣika*). According to the *Aśokāvadāna*, the emperor convened a five-year assembly of the community (*pañcavarṣikam vṛtaṃ*) and made a generous gift of a large sum of money to the *saṅgha*. The convening of the *pañcavarṣika* was linked with the completion of the king's tour of the holy sites of Buddhism and the revival of the Bodhi tree destroyed by queen Tiṣyarakṣitā, a fierce opponent of Buddhism. It is tempting to interpret the report of the *avadāna* on the revival of the ever-blossoming Bodhi tree – a symbol of the triumph of the teaching—as a proof of the purging of the community of schismatics and the establishment of unity, which, as evidenced by his edicts, the emperor strove to achieve.

Tārānātha mentions three such festival receptions held in the Buddhist community in Aśoka's time (there is not a hint of any council in his account). The last of these receptions was held on the occasion of the termination of a tour ("a three-month regaling of all *bhikṣus* by the king in connection with the consecration of monuments"),[110] and Tārānātha, links this event with Aśoka's wish to become a Buddha (". . . the king prayed ardently that by means of the root/in consequence of/these good acts of his he might/in time/become a Buddha"). Could this report of Tārānātha not be interpreted in the light of the available data on the pro-Buddhist policy carried out by Aśoka in the last years of his reign, when he became a zealous proponent of the Buddhist doctrine? For Tārānātha refers the story of the third reception precisely to this period of Aśoka's rule, just before the story of his actual loss of power and death.

Extremely interesting evidence is found in the Chinese text of Kumārajīva, where we are told that Aśoka had convened a large five-year assembly (*pañcavarṣapariṣad*), at which the issues of the doctrine were discussed. In the author's opinion, dissent at this assembly led to the formation of new sects. In other ources these events are linked with the Council, which makes it possible to outline a certain relationship between the more ancient factual tradition concerning the *pañcavarṣika* under Aśoka and the report later transformed by the followers of the Ceylonese Vibhajjavāda school into a story about the Council allegedly attended by the emperor himself.

Thus the sources of both the Ceylonese Vibhajjavāda school

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and of the northern Buddhist school, so different from and so hostile to it, as well as the late Tibetan historian Tārānātha, all give an account of an assembly of the Buddhist *saṅgha* (or a ceremonial reception of the *saṅgha* by Aśoka) to discuss organisational matters and preserve the community's unity. Only the adherents of the Vibhajjavāda school and Buddhaghoṣa, who followed them, included the story about the council, mentioned neither in northern tradition nor in Aśoka's edicts.[111] The school of the Vibhajjavādians, which had evidently been separated from the Sarvāstivādinas, as far back as Aśoka's time,[112] sought to represent itself as more ancient and to attach more importance to its doctrine protraying it as the true teaching of the Buddha. It therefore included in its own chronicle an account of a Council at which Tissa allegedly "united into a single whole the Holy Law" of the Buddha and made public his *Kathāvatthu*.[113]

It is quite probable that the authorship of the *Kathāvatthu* was also ascribed to Tissa by later editors of this school, for this rather motley text, despite its ancient core, dates on the whole from a far later time than the Mauryan epoch. According to I.P. Minaev, "there is hardly any doubt as to a fairly recent origin of this book. Both its history, as told by the Buddhists themselves, and its very contents rule out any dating of this document from the time of the III Council or from the period immediately following it."[114]

Studies by P.H.L. Eggermont have shown that the data of the Ceylonese chronicles on the Council come from a later version; they are missing in the *Aśokasūtra*, on which legends about Aśoka were based.[115]

It is significant that in the earliest Ceylonese chronicle, the *Dīpavaṃsa*, the two events (the assembly of the community and the so-called Council under Tissa's chairmanship) are separated, whereas in the *Mahāvaṃṣa* the two episodes are merged into a single story of the Council, and it is in the *Mahāvamsa* that Aśoka's role in holding it is emphasised. The data on the assembly of the community under the emperor (*saṅghassa samnipāta*) or on the reception that he gave for the *saṅgha* (*pañcavarṣa*), the historicity of which is proved by abundant evidence, were used by the authors of the Ceylonese chronicles as a point of departure and a model for sketching up a picture of the Third Buddhist Council where Tissa made public his *Kathāvatthu* condemning the trends which,

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from the viewpoint of the Vibhajjavādins, were heretical. A. Bareau.[116] following in the tracks of L. de la Vallée-Poussin,[117] believed the Sarvāstivādins to have been the principal opponents of the Vibhajjavādins. Perhaps this anti-Sarvāstivāda tendency partly accounts for the inclusion of the story about the Council in the chronicle and for the biased representation of its history and character.

Consequently, the reports of the Third Buddhist Council, which stem solely from Ceylonese tradition, are due primarily to a biased representation, by followers of the Vibhajjavāda school, of the real event of Mauryan history. The real event seems to have been only the assembly of the community (the *pañcavarṣa* of northern tradition)[118] called by the king in view of the difficulties that had arisen in the Buddhist *saṅgha* and in connection with a change in his religious policy. The "prehistory" of this event, described at great length in the chronicles and confirmed by the data of northern sources as well as by Mauryan epigraphy, actually reflected the strained situation which existed in the final period of Aśoka's reign.[119]

Aśoka was the first ruler of ancient India who was conscious of the importance of Buddhism for the consolidation of the empire. It is interesting to compare the attitudes of Bimbisāra, Ajātaśatru and Aśoka towards the *saṅgha*. During the reign of the first Magadhan rulers, Buddhism was taking shape organisationally and extending its influence; the community was gaining the support of the state. According to tradition, Bimbisāra and Ajātaśatru met the Buddha and became his follower. Ajātasatru asked his advice about his struggle against the Licchhavis. Sources have retained many stories about Bimbisāra's aid to Buddhist monks, and about the donation of Veḷuvana park (in the vicinity of Rājagṛha) to the Buddha and his adherents. However, the Magadhan kings kept in touch mostly with the *saṅgha*, i.e. with Buddhist monks, who lived in seclusion.[120] Early Buddhism was not concerned with laymen.

In contrast to this, Aśoka sought support from lay Buddhists as well, having correctly evaluated their role in social and spiritual life. It was not fortuitous that even the edicts of a purely Buddhist nature were addressed to all followers of that creed. His edicts appealed to them. They contained neither sophisticated philosophical categories nor even any exposition of the main

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principles of Buddhist religious doctrine, while such notions as "attainment of Heaven" or "earning happiness in this world and the next" were quite comprehensible to them.[121] The tenets of Buddhist ethics were equally familiar to laymen. The similarity between the principles of the *Dharma* of Aśoka's edicts and the rules of behaviour of a house-owner adhering to Buddhist teaching—*upāsaka* (as given in the Pāli canon) is obvious : both rested on ethical rather than philosophical ideas and were determined by the requirements of everyday life.[122]

The central authority showed concern for the followers of Buddhism as far back as the "Schism Edict" mentioned earlier. The Sārnāth version contains the order that one copy should be passed on to the laymen of the district who were to assemble every day of the *uposatha* to get acquainted with it.[123] On these days lay Buddhists went to the *vihāras*; instead of the usual five basic disciplinary rules, they were to abide by eight rules of moral behaviour (*aṭṭha-sīla*), listen to the *śūtras* of the Canon and to various religious texts.[124] Laymen thus came close to real monks—members of the *saṅgha*. The eight rules of moral behaviour were, so to speak, equalised with the ten rules observed by the monks.[125]

The emergence of the sect of the Mahāsaṅghikas (predecessors of the Mahāyānists), who advocated a more liberal interpretation of the *Vinaya* rules and gave more attention to laymen, can be associated with Aśoka's reign. It is possible that the roots of the *Mahāyāna* are to be sought in the early epoch when the community maintained close contacts with laymen.

While prior to Aśoka Buddhism was largely a regional religion,[126] spread only in the Gangetic Valley and embracing mostly monks, in his time the influence of this creed vastly expanded and the relations between the *saṅgha* and society at large acquired a new character, transforming Buddhism from a purely monastic movement into a religion of great scope and influence.

As is well known, Buddhism overflowed the boundaries of India. The southern tradition attributed the wide spread of the Buddhist doctrine to the missions sent out to various countries after the Third Buddhist Council in Pāṭaliputra.[127] The chronicles speak of missions sent to Kashmir and Gāndhāra, to the country of the Yonas, to the Himālayas, Suvarṇabhūmi[128] and Ceylon. This evidence is confirmed by epigraphic data : inscriptions have

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been found in which the names of Buddhist monks are identical with those of the heads of the missions.[129] This activity resulted in the appearance of various Buddhist schools and sects in different parts of India and the adjacent regions.[130]

In many texts the penetration of Buddhism in Ceylon is dated from Aśoka's time. Once again epigraphy has dispelled doubts about the reliability of written sources.[131] Some sources warrant the supposition that in the Mauryan epoch the teaching of the Buddha had spread to the southern areas of Central Asia[132] and had probably reached Khotan;[133] the Hellenistic states had also become acquainted with it.

3. The Dharma of Aśoka's Edicts and the Dharmavijaya Policy

Emperor Aśoka called his edicts *dhammalipi* or *dhammasavana* (Skr. *dharmaśravaṇa*), i.e. "inscriptions about the *Dharma*" or "proclamations about the *Dharma*". And indeed, the royal decrees devote much space to the exposition of these principles. To quote Radhagovinda Basak's apt remark, "to speak about Aśoka's *Dharma* is to speak about the essence of all his edicts."[134] The term itself is difficult to translate. In texts belonging to different epochs, it is used in different senses.[135] Certain tenets of *Dharma*, identical with those of Aśokan edicts, are found in Brāhmaṇic and Buddhist writings. Evidently, they were known in an earlier period. Some ancient Indian sources elaborated the theory of *rājadharma*—the principles of governing a country.[136] *Dharma* was used to mean universal and social order, as well as the "laws" of the individual *varṇas* and *jātis*,[137] the norms of pious behaviour, the code of man's duties and the code of religious rules (the Buddha designated his teaching by this name).

Scholars disagree in their interpretation of this term as used in the edicts. The view has been expressed that its essence was purely Buddhist; some scholars even identified Aśoka's *Dharma* with Buddhism.[138] Wincent Smith, and after him R. Mookerji, saw in it a kind of universal religion.[139] Scholars were not unanimous about the roots of the *Dharma* either : some connected it directly with *rājadharma*,[140] others regarded it as the Mauryan emperor's innovation.[141]

An analysis of the inscriptions shows that it included rules of

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a pious way of living and behaviour, which consisted in obedience to parents, respect for teachers and elders, Śramaṇas and Brāhmaṇas, kindness towards friends and relatives, generosity in alms, abstinence from prodigality and avarice, etc.[142] Aśoka called for composition (*daya, dāya* – II and VII PE), truthfulness (*sacam*—II MiRE, II and VII PE), gentleness (*mādavaṃ*—XIII RE), self-control (*sayame*—VII and IX RE, IV RE) and also for non-killing of living beings, forgiveness, absence of envy, etc.[143]

In the XIIth Rock Edict Aśoka said that one must respect one's own sect and other sects and elaborate the principles (*sāra*) of their doctrines so that every school should prosper and the *Dharma* be glorified (*iyaṃ ca etisa phale yam atvapaṣaḍavaḍhi ca bhoti dharamasa ca dipana*—the Mansehra version). The same idea is expressed in the Greek translation of the inscription. There the *Dharma* is placed above religious systems and basic principles of individual doctrines. Moreover, it conveys, as it were, the essence of various creeds[144] since it deals with general ethical norms and has a pronounced practical character.[145] Evidence in favour of this conclusion is contained in the Greek-Aramaic bilingual[146] and in the Greek inscription from Kandahar, which is a translation of the XIIth and XIIIth Major Rock Edicts.[147] The Indian term *dhamma* (*dharma*) is translated by the Greek (*eusebeia*) which has the meaning "piety", "veneration", "respect",[148] but not "religion" or faith".

The reference in the VIIth Pillar Edict to the appointment of *Dharmamahāmātras* for all communities and sects—the Buddhists, the Jainas (Nirgranthas), the Ājīvikas, etc.– shows the difference between the *Dharma* as a set of ethical rules and any particular religious doctrine.[149] While the Brāhmaṇic "laws" implied that the king was to set forth a separate *Dharma* for each *varṇa*, population group and each particular organisation (*svadharma*), the principles of behaviour expounded in the inscriptions were to become universal for the whole empire.

At the same time, these rules bear an obvious imprint of Buddhism. This is accounted for by the emperor's personal preference for Buddhist teaching and the particular importance it had acquired by that time. Evidently, Aśoka began to spread the rules of the *Dharma* after his conversion to Buddhism.[150] We are still unable to give a final solution of this problem, since the earliest edicts—the Minor Rock Edicts—are dated approximately

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from the tenth year after the coronation. In them, the description of the principles follows the announcement of the adoption of Buddhism and the visit to the community, suggesting that such events had according to the emperor, taken place earlier.[161] The Kandahar bilingual inscription states that ten years later (evidently, after the coronation) the king Piyadasi "announced to the people [the principles] of the *Dharma*, (*eusebeia*).

Aśoka, who was interested in the religious and philosophical aspects of the new religion expressed his personal attitude towards it in terms of "respect for the Buddha, the *saṅgha* and the doctrine". As for his practical policy, he leaned upon the ethical doctrine of Buddhism and made use of its tenets to elaborate the *Dharma*. Some scholars hold that in many respects it is in line with the moral principles set forth in the *Dhammapada*.[152] In particular, the rule of the non-killing of living being was, in all likelihood, linked with one of the main commandments of Buddhism. The injunction, 'always to speak the truth' can be interpreted likewise (*sacaṃ vattaviyaṃ*).[153] By way of example, let us quote a few comparable statements from the two sources.[154]

"What is the *Dharma*? It is absence of sin, many good deeds, charity, donation, truthfulness, purity" (II MiRE). "Conquer anger by love, conquer evil by good. Conquer the stingy by giving. Conquer the liar by truth." "One should utter the truth. One should not be angry. One should give even from a scanty store to him who asks." Not to do any evil, to cultivate good, to purify one's mind—this is the Teaching of the Buddhas" (*Dhammapada*, 223.224.183).[155]

A similarity can also be traced in the terms (in particular, those denoting such important categories as "effort", "zeal," etc).[156] Such similarities show that in all probability both the edicts and the *Dhammapada* reflect those common ethical ideas which were widespread at the time when the ancient canonical texts were compiled.

An influence of Buddhist eithics can also be seen when comparing Aśoka's inscriptions with texts when both state the rules of behaviour for lay Buddhists. Here, too, we find the same requirements—respect for teachers, parents, friends, Śramaṇas and Brāhmaṇas, as well as warning against acts leading to a grave sin.[157] The Buddha's teaching of the equality of people by birth

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and the direct dependence of man and his future on his own actions and deeds is comparable with the statement of the edicts that people have equal opportunities for "the attainment of Heaven" (*svage*).[158] "Even a humble [man] can achieve great Heaven, if he zealously follows the principles of the *Dharma*" (I PE). The IIIrd Pillar Edict[159] speaks about acquiring well-being in this and the other world.

The same objective was set for his lay followers by the Buddha.[160] According to the *Dīgha-Nikāya*, the monks ought to show them "the path leading to the attainment of Heaven."[161] The early Buddhist sources contain a description of "an ideal society", which the Buddha depicted in his sermons. While censuring the Brāhmaṇas for the violation of many ethical principles and noting the general decay of morals in the past as a result of base desires, he predicted the restoration of morality and justice through his teaching and appealed to people to abstain from lying and prodigality, to show respect for their elders, to refrain from violence, etc. For the lay Buddhists, similar rules in the inscriptions were evidently not merely standards of a pious life, but a reminder of the Buddhist tenets as well. These appeals acquired a special meaning for them, and there can hardly be any doubt that the edicts on the *Dharma* were congenial to the *upāsakas* and the *upāsikas* in the various sections of the population.

The impact of the Buddhist doctrine was also manifest in Aśoka's attitude towards Brāhmaṇic traditions, customs, and certain individual tenets of the orthodox doctrine. Striving to consolidate the state and pursue a policy of religious tolerance to achieve that goal, the Mauryan emperor naturally refrained from straightforward attacks on Brahmaṇism in his edicts, but indirect evidence of his anti-Brahmaṇic stand is discernible in them. In the IXth Major Rock Edict all kinds of festival ceremonies are sharply condemned : "People celebrate various feasts : on the occasion of recovery from an illness, a son's or a daughter's marriage, the birth of a child, the setting off on a journey...but all this makes little sense."[162] Further on, the moral precepts introduced by the king are contrasted with the Brahmaṇic rules. In the IVth Major Rock Edict, Aśoka, like the Buddha, compares the period of his rule with the past, when the *Dharma* was not

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observed and when, for many centuries, huge numbers of living beings had been killed.[163]

In this connection the sermons on the meaning of sacrifices, ascribed to the Buddha, can be recalled. The Buddha rejected the costly as well as the cruel rites of sacrificing living beings, which he described as a "mean occupation", and, instead, urged people to strive for generosity, kind deeds, etc.[164] The same principles were recorded in the edicts : they expressed a practical approach instead of religious observance, stressing not the ritualistic aspects, but man's acts and deeds.

In this light, the following statement of the Minor Rock Edict is noteworthy : "The gods who at that time had (that is, earlier—author) not intermingled with men in Jaṃbūdvīpa, are now intermingled [with men]."[165] Interpretation of this passage has given rise to sharp disputes.[166] We believe that it reflects the anti-Brāhmaṇic bias of the *upāsaka*-king. It should be noted that in some versions the principal objects were men who earlier did not intermingle with gods and then did intermingle. The fact that the versions were not identical shows that, to convey the meaning of the text "intermingling of gods with men", it was immaterial who—gods or men—changed their former state. The important point was the erasing for a sharp contrast between earthly and heavenly beings and, perhaps, a reminder of the golden age when they lived together.[167] If the gods had mingled[168] with people, the latter were no longer expected to obey them. "Both the humble and the noble," the edict reads, "can attain Heaven." Everything depends on individual zeal and the strict observance of the *Dharma*. So even the attainment of the supreme goal is not determined by the will of the gods, but solely by the efforts of the faithful themselves. By their own actions they can attain great Heaven (*vipule svagge*), where the layman "reaps the fruit of his earthly actions" (*bahu kallāṇam, sādhavāni*—VKE and VII PRE).[169] Personal zeal and pious behaviour are more important than sacrifices to propitiate the gods; man's activity is more important than divine assistance.[170]

This was a blow at orthodox Brāhmaṇism, which taught that man's destiny during his lifetime and even after his death was determined by the gods. Buddhism did not come out against gods; moreover, it was even "interested in Brāhmaṇic deities, glorifying the Buddhist heroes,"[171] but it rejected the imperative

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existence of a divine creator engendering everything in the world. For people who believe in him, "there exist neither wishes nor efforts, they do not have to do anything or to abstain from action.[172] According to the Buddhist doctrine, man's welfare depends on his own actions. It is only upon himself that he shall rely, for "by oneself is evil done, by oneself is one defiled. By oneself is evil left undone, by oneself is one purified. Purity and impurity depend on oneself. No one purifies another".[173] The *Mahāparinibbāna-sūtta* emphasises : "Do not ask others for protection, be your own protection."[174]

We believe that in the light of these precepts, it is possible to interpret the preceding passage about intermingling of gods and men from the standpoint of the Buddhist attitude towards gods, who were no longer regarded as supreme beings, but as beings subordinate, like men, to the "laws of universal evolution."[175]

However, it would be wrong to conclude from this that the rules of the *Dharma* of the edicts were an exposition of the Buddhist doctrine. On the contrary, as aptly noted by the eminent Buddhologist E. Lamotte, the *Dharma* of Aśoka's inscriptions drastically differs from the Buddhist doctrine—the *Saddharma* : it renders, in traditional Indian formulas, the principles of "the natural law" (les principles de la loi naturelle).[176] This connection with tradition is reflected in the edicts, where the *Dharma* is called an "ancient rule" (*esā porānā pakiti*), which "must be durable and which must be observed."[177] The concept of *svarga* was known back in the Vedic epoch,[178] and it was this traditional concept that Buddhism had adopted, though in a modified form. It is noteworthy that the edicts set forth the general idea of the attainment of Heaven without any hint at reincarnation, thus laying no stress on religious and philosophical aspects.[179]

Many principles of the *Dharma* had been propagated in the pre-Mauryan and Mauryan and were received as familiar by the followers of various religious trends and sections of society. Nearness to the traditional ideas promoted a swift assimilation of the *Dharma* by the masses and thus furthered Aśoka's political success. Only for a limited group of people was the observance of the *Dharma* considered not obligatory. "I turn my attention," the emperor stressed, "upon all degrees of men."[180] "Let the humble and the noble practise devotion."[181]

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The practical orientation of the principles of the *Dharma* is clearly expressed in the inscriptions. The Ist Major Pillar Edict reads : "Here is the rule : government through the *Dharma*, bringing happiness through the *Dharma*, and the defence [of the empire] through the *Dharma*."[182] The inculcation of the *Dharma* was largely dictated by political reasons—the need for consolidating the state. The policy of *dharmavijaya* (lit. "conquest through the *Dharma*")[183] was suited to the new conditions of building a giant empire, which was to incorporate numerous tribes and peoples at different levels of political, socio-economic and cultural development. It encompassed regions which did not belong to the Indian territory proper : in the west there were territories inhabited by non-Indian tribes, and in the south, areas with a population different ethnically and linguistically. The principles of the *Dharma* were obligatory for all. The Vth Rock Edict mentions the dispatch of *Dharmamāhāmātra* to the Kambojas and the Greeks (the Yonas).[184] Aśoka also addressed his inscriptions to the inhabitants of Arachosia. Norms of just behaviour "were to serve as the foundation of ideological unity in his vast heterogeneous state, in which every tribe, every people, every community or professional group lived in conformity with its own time-honoured laws."[185]

Moreover, the policy of *dharmavijaya* made it possible to keep under control the various groups of the population not only in the centre of the empire but in the outlying areas as well. These functions were delegated to the *dharmamahāmātras*. "They are appointed," the Vth Major Rock Edict notes, "for the welfare and happiness of hired men, Brāhmaṇas and Vaiśyas, orphans and the aged, for the success and spread of the *Dharma*."[186] The Yerragudi version of the Minor Rock Edict mentions Brāhmaṇas, elephant drivers and scribes for whose benefit the tenets of the *Dharma* were to be explained.[187] Officials were dispatched even to the families of the king's relatives.[188]

Other categories of officials were also concerned with the propagation of the *Dharma*. The VIIth Major Pillar Edict refers to agents sent to the people to explain it.[189] One of the duties of officials making regular inspections was to check whether the rules of *Dharma* were being complied with. Great store was set by the policy of *dharmavijaya*. The royal council of dignitaries, the *pariṣad*,[190] was in charge of these matters, and even the

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emperor himself undertook tours of the country to meet the population of the *janapadas* and instruct them in the *Dharma* (VIII MiRE).[191]

Aśoka regarded *dharmavijaya* not as a temporary measure, but as a major way to solve the problems of the Mauryan policy in general. Some principles of pious behaviour directly followed from the needs of day-to-day life and the specific situation. The emperor, for example, considered pompous ceremonies unnecessary. This was evidently a result not only of religious but also of economic considerations.[192]

It would be one-sided to explain the emperor's appeal for a kind treatment of slaves and servants in the light of traditional religious beliefs alone. Doubtlessly, it must have had some social significance as well. It may have been caused by the intensified exploitation of slaves and dependent labourers, which led to discontent among the exploited groups of the population. Seeking to consolidate the empire, the central power was trying to find a way of making such conflicts less sharp. In other words, the rules of the *Dharma*, dealing with the pious way of living and behaviour as they did, at the same time conformed to the basic political, economic and social principles of the Mauryas.

Towards the end of his reign, Aśoka, as has been mentioned earlier, began to follow a markedly Pro-Buddhist policy, which meant a reversal of the main principles of *dharmavijaya*. In the so-called Buddhist edicts, issued in the last years of his reign, norms of moral behaviour are no longer expounded. What is meant by *Dharma* here is the Buddhist teaching. Aśoka declares his loyalty to the *Dharma*, the Buddha, and the *saṅgha*, i.e. to the *triratna* (the Bairat edict). The Buddhist canonical texts are now called the texts of the doctrine—*dhammapaliyāyāni*, which, to quote the edict, "were written by the Buddha to overcome false teaching".

On the whole, it appears from the discussion made above that the *Dharma* of the edicts cannot be identified with the Buddhist doctrine.

4. Orthodox Teachings and Cults and the Philosophical Schools

The general picture of the ideological evolution of India in the Mauryan epoch would be dull, biased and distorted if some

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aspects of Brāhmaṇic and Hindu tradition are not taken in consideration. A specific analysis of these aspects, however, involves considerable difficulties caused by the sectarian self-isolation of some religious schools and trends, generally typical of ancient India. By this mean not only the refusal of one teaching to adopt the concepts and ideas of another, but also each trend's firm determination to ignore other trends, considered "heretical", and thereby deny their existence. It is difficult to say to what extent this trend was effective specifically in the Mauryan period but there can be no doubt that it has greatly complicated the task of understanding the spiritual life of the time. Both Buddhist and Jaina traditions are represented by numerous texts illustrating in detail the cardinal and specific developments in their own conceptual evolution, whereas information on any other trend is really negligible. They also give very little positive information on the phenomena of the contemporary "orthodox" religion which had emerged some time earlier from the Vedas, the religion whose propositions had served as their point of departure at their origin and from which they later became completely divorced.

However, the "trunk-like" development of Indian religious thought was by no means stopped by the emergence of reformation doctrines. Brāhmaṇism developed and in the end again became, in a modified form, an important trend in the development of the country's spiritual culture. Of course, an analysis of this process, completed many centuries after the Mauryas, is beyond the scope of this study. However, no analysis of the Mauryan period is possible without a reference to the immediate heritage of the traditional Vedic-Brāhmaṇical religion, which was temporarily pushed into the background but retained a tangible influence on the general course of ancient Indian religious life. The significance of that influence is borne out by sources of the Mauryan epoch, including Megasthenes and Aśoka's edicts.

Classical writers show the Brāhmaṇas as the main sect. According to Strabo (XV.I.59), they enjoyed a special esteem as compared with the Śramaṇas. They also had a greater unity of view. According to Porphyry[193], who drew upon ancient tradition, the Brāhmaṇas constituted a group of priests of one and the same religious way of thinking, they went back to a common clan and they descended from one mother and one father.

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From classical sources we also know about Brāhmaṇic ascetics who abided by the rules of behaviour prescribed to a *brahmacārī*. [Strabo, for example, reports that Brahmaṇas became ascetics for 37 years and spent that time in studying the sacred texts; according to the *Mānava Dharmaśāstra* (III. 1), the longest time for a *brahmacārī* also was 37 years].

Brāhmaṇic ascetics had many supporters. This was accounted for by the fact that, despite the emergence of reformation trends, the bulk of the population still adhered to the ancient rituals and in their everyday life constantly turned to Brāhmaṇas, who retained their power over ritualism. Even Buddhist texts refer to the worship of Vedic and post-Vedic deities by various sections of the population.

Pāṇini shows that the Brāhmaṇas' role in the ritual was quite considerable. In Aśoka's inscriptions they are described as "firmly established" (*suvihitā*)—evidently, in faith : as evidenced by the IXth Major Rock Edict, during his tours of the holy Buddhist places the king visited Brāhmaṇas and bestowed rich gifts upon them.

In the Mauryan period and later, the major religious development which to the fullest extent incorporated the elements of Vedic-Brāhmaṇic tradition was Viṣṇuism (Vaiṣṇavism). A peculiar synthesis of various mythological traditions, it later constituted the core of the complex and heterogeneous religion which received the name of Hinduism. In the mythological (and also ritualistic) sphere proper, Viṣṇuism drew upon a multitude of ancient and relatively new creeds which had emerged directly from the midst of the people. It had also imbibed some complex and really novel religious and philosophical ideas. Moreover, without this ideological basis, the individual, often quite isolated, cults could not have merged into single system and the latter would have had no unifying centre. Therefore, before speaking about the ritualistic specificity of Viṣṇuism, it is necessary first to outline the theoretical premises which had determined its shaping and to mention the most essential and fruitful developments that had considerable influence on Indian culture and had taken origin within the framework of the Vedic-Brāhmaṇic trend itself.

For the many centuries of its development Viṣṇuism practically stood aloof from the reformation teachings[194] (here we do not speak of the later and debatable interrelations between some of

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the Viṣṇu *avatāras* and the mythological images of the *Mahāyāna*, and the southern Indian Viṣṇuism and Ājīvikism.[195] In its essence, Vaiṣṇava ideas did not encroach upon the "laws" of orthodox tradition; they were true to it even when, after the disappearance of the Vedic cults proper, Viṣṇuism became the chief successor of that archaic system. Two crucial events played a decisive role in its shaping : the creation of the *Upaniṣads* and the emergence of a new (deviating from the spirit of Vedism in many ways) philosophical doctrine -- the *Sānkhya*. Viṣṇuism was a peculiar conglomeration of elements of the two doctrines, which at first were so dissimilar.

When considering the relations between the *Upaniṣads* and the earlier tradition of the *Vedas* and *Brāhmaṇas*, it is usually stressed that, being an expression of the first ideological reform in Indian history, the upaniṣads at the same time reflected the impasse at which orthodox Brāhmaṇism had arrived. The unjustified dictates of the priesthood in all aspects of life, its conservatism and its attempts to perpetuate the outmoded ritual gave an impetus to a reformatory spirit not only within the framework of the central (orthodox) tradition, but also— what is indisputably more important—in the trends heading towards a complete break with it. Attention should be paid to the ideological aspect proper of the crisis which befell Vedic India, in order to explain the particular forms in which the discontent with the old tradition was expressed in the *Upaniṣads*. Naturally social conflicts invariably provided the basis and the background in this case, but it should be borne in mind that the *Upaniṣads* translated their concepts into the "language of ideas".

This complex and many-sided teaching can be confined to three main precepts. Each of them provides evidence of a break with Vedic tradition or, rather, of an attempt to go back to the original principles of the Vedas, but on a new basis. The several centuries that separated the final version of the *Ṛgveda* from the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* saw not only specific evolutionary changes but a basic shift in the world outlook as well. The set of ideas that were rooted in primitive society had largely lost its importance in the new conditions. It is not impossible that this processes had begun much earlier than is commonly supposed and the reflection of the preceding stage of spiritual development in the *Ṛgveda* became feasible only because the epoch it strove to express had

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actually ended. Therefore it was possible to represent it as a whole, to describe its characteristic features and the limits of its ideas, a task so often accomplishable only by an outside observer. Be that as it may, the old world outlook had remained a harmonious unity in the *Ṛgveda*, while the later texts in Vedic tradition speak unambiguously of its disintegration into its constituent elements.

The literature of the *Brāhmaṇas* is usually regarded as a natural continuation of the *Ṛgveda*, but in actual fact the links are purely formal, while in essence the *Brahmaṇas* contradict and sometimes even reject the *Ṛgveda*. A mechanical sum of particulars can never replace an organic whole. The world represented in the *Ṛgveda* would not allow of any other division than that given in the texts itself : any expansion in scope without a corresponding elaboration of the system threatened to destroy the entire building. In this sense the literature of the *Upaniṣads* is the genuine successor of early Vedic tradition.

The religion of the *Ṛgveda* is generally defined as the worship of natural forces or as a kind of primaeval pantheism. In our opinion, it is with this that the first of the three main philosophical precepts of the *Upaniṣads* is connected. In the *Ṛgveda*, man worships nature as the utmost synthesis of all existing things. He does not oppose himself to it but sees in it a natural justification of his own existence. The *Upaniṣads* returned to this theme, but they treated both man and nature in a different fashion. Unlike the static world of the *Ṛgveda*, the model of the world given in them was "dynamic". It is not man as such that is real, but the inner impulse governing him. Nature is not mountains and clouds but the source creating the regular sequence of the seasons, epochs and cycles and the unexpected "explosive" changes in what might have seemed stabilised processes. A visible thing is devoid of sense : it is merely a fossilised product of the force that had once engendered it; in itself it is unreal or rather anti-real, for it obstructs the vision of true life of which it must have been a manifestation. Hence the close attention to the "internal essence" of existence, which is basically inexpressible, since every particular form of the incarnation of its all-embracing entity would mean a restriction of it. In this sense, the central idea of the *Upaniṣads*—Ātman—Brahman—marks a fundamentally new

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variant, parallel, as it were, to Brāhmaṇic philosophy based on the Vedas.

The second principle of the *Upaniṣads* is also essentially comparable with the concepts of the *Ṛgveda*. It concerns the problem of the continuity of specific forms of life. Man is mortal, nature is immortal—such is the general precept. But no less important is the link between these two poles: how can an organism, transient in its essence, take part in the collective indestructibility of the universal whole? The *Ṛgveda* solved the problem in a primitive way: every living being is immortal owing to its link with the indestructibility of the species. The *Upaniṣads* put the question in a different way: it is not the species that is immortal; it is the individual who is capable of leaving after himself the sum total of his actions and aspirations. In spite of the attempt to reduce this idea, first advanced by the *Upaniṣads*, to primitive animistic concepts, it will remain an essentially new precept, which reflects the depth of the philosophical endeavours of that epoch. The elaboration of this idea in the *Upaniṣads* meant a new approach to the problem of the relation between an individual being and the being of the species, between a personality shut off in its limited existence and the immortality of nature. The answer given by the *Upaniṣads* was not only recognised by the orthodox tradition, but was adopted by some reformation trends as well.

The third principle of the teaching of the *Upaniṣads* even to a greater extent that the former two, reveals the change in the world outlook that had developed over the few centuries of the evolution of the Vedic tradition. This concerns the essence of the religious process, i.e. the involvement with the world above him consciously achieved by man. Only a few parts of the *Ṛgveda* can be regarded as religious literature proper. Their subjects are simple, and the purpose for which they were written and recited was still more primitive. Gods were more powerful than men and had to be propitiated; they personified everything to which man could aspire : limitless strength, beauty, immortality and perennial youth. They did not need to come closer to nature, for they were nature. By worshipping them, man not only ensured success for himself but also communicated with the ideal existence which he was unable to create in his everyday life. The process of worship itself thus comprised something especially significant and

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attractive. It meant a contact with another life, so beautiful in the eyes of the worshippers. One who was faithful to his religion hoped to become dissolved in that life after his death when, in reward for his pious behaviour, he would ascend to Heaven, the *svarga*—"the abode of the gods".

In the late Vedic epoch, many of these concepts had lost their traditional significance. The *Upaniṣads* were trying to "go back" to the past in two ways. Many old myths were re-interpreted, and new ones introduced; the mythological data underwent, as it were, a re-examination and re-interpretation. Besides, what is more important, the communion of man with the "world of divine eternity" was treated in quite a different way. The concept of paradise had been retained in the *Upaniṣads* as well : "the path of the ancestors" terminated in a righteous man's entering the world of the immortals. However, an entirely different image had emerged—"the path of the gods" leading to the "liberation" from rebirth and to the dissolution of human self in the indivisible entirety of the universe. All the subsequent tradition of Indian mysticism, both orthodox and reformatory, proceeded from this idea. It is more important to emphasise here, however, that the authors of the *Upaniṣads* regarded this thesis, not as an innovation, but as restoration of the previous harmonious perception of life which they found in the thinking of the early Vedic epoch.

The three preceding precepts had a direct impact on the further evolution of the mythological content of the orthodox religion. The Vedic deities had lost their former significance by the time of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*. Besides, the spread of Brāhmaṇism across the Indian subcontinent pushed to the foreground the problem of the attitude towards numerous local cults : they were to be either ousted or assimilated in some way or other. The spirit of reformation first arose within the orthodox tradition. By way of illustration, Uddālaka, one of the authors of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, can be cited.[196] Views, not only different from the established ones, but even contradicting some major tenets of traditional Brāhmaṇism, are ascribed to him. Uddālaka expressed the materialist tendency in the philosophy of the *Upaniṣads* and called in question the idea of the origin of existence from nothing; he resorted to experiments, etc. These ideas, "heretical" from the viewpoint of the orthodox teaching, had been advanced

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long before the emergence of the reformation sects and might have exerted considerable influence on their founders.

The teaching of the *Upaniṣads* did not prevent the emergence of new elements in the sphere of the cult. The unity of all nature, represented as being a result of the original life impulse, common to all beings, served as an argument for the inclusion in Brāhmaṇism of various new deities and their substitution for the once revered but by then obsolete mythological images of Vedism-Brāhmaṇism. The individuality of a deity became blurred or, in any case, relative : the involved process of deification observed in other religions (for example, in classical antiquity) was immensely simplified, where one and the same god could appear in numerous hypostases. The impersonality of the central image in the religion of the *Upaniṣads* - the Brahman (in whom the faithful was not merely dissolved but with whom he identified himself)—also contributed to the rejuvenation of the Brāhmaṇic pantheon: practical worship was turning into a mere instrument of religion. All this was particularly conspicuous in the shaping of Viṣṇuism as the nucleus of the new stage in the history of the orthodox tradition. Besides the *Upaniṣads*, it had been considerably influenced by the teaching of the *Sāṅkhya*.

The reforms in the religious and philosophical sphere discussed above took place in a period preceding the Mauryan epoch, but the chronological gap was not too wide. The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* was evidently written not earlier than the 7th-6th century B.C., and the tradition of the *Upaniṣads* still continued as late as the 3rd century B.C. and perhaps even later. The inception of the *Sāṅkhya*, in all likelihood, chronologically coincided with the emergence of the older *Upaniṣads*; the formation of this system took another few centuries. However, the concepts of the *Sāṅkhya* were incorporated in Viṣṇuism after being refracted through the prism of another religious-philosophical text that culminated the effort of religious comprehension of its doctrine—the *Bhagavadgītā*.

Unfortunately, the time when this short poem was written has not yet been established. It is noteworthy, however, that the authors of recent studies are inclined to give it a rather early date. The view, advanced in the 1900's-1930's, that its incorporation in the *Mahābhārāta* was a later philosophical interpolation, no longer receives any weighty support. The recording of the *Gītā* might

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well have served as the starting point for the building up of the individual episodes of "the Great Poem" around the central nucleus found for it.[197] An exact dating is, of course, impossible, but the most acceptable time for its compilation seems to be the 3rd-2nd century B.C.[198] It is extremely surprising that in the Mauryan epoch in one and the same country—practically in one and the same region (the *Gītā* was undoubtedly created in the north)—intensive spiritual activity was taking place, which, however, found no direct confirmation in the Mauryan texts. We can only wonder at the isolation of each of the traditions of that time, which makes the reconstruction of a spiritual life of that epoch so difficult. On the other hand, the influence of the ideas of the *Gītā* upon the development of India's spiritual culture in the latter half of the first millennium B.C. is beyond doubt. Viṣṇuism was taking shape under its direct impact.

The doctrine set forth in the *Bhagavadgītā* conforms to the definition of "neo-Brāhmaṇism." As has been said, the orthodox tradition was not static, but its fundamental distinction from the reformation systems proper consisted not so much in its accepting the authority of the Vedas (which in many cases was purely formal) as in its striving to bring the aspirations of the new epoch in conformity with that "spirit of harmony" which the Indians ascribed to the *Ṛgveda*: none of the older values were to be destroyed or to disappear: this peculiar *ahimsā* in relation to its own spiritual past is characteristic of the whole history of Brahmaṇism in that tempestuous period.

The idea of the *Gītā* proceeded from the concept of "three *guṇas*" introduced by the *Sāṅkhya*.

This poem is a hymn to energy and passion, in an obvious contrast to most Indian ethical systems, in which impassiveness was, as it were, an ideal. But its stand in this case was peculiar: when an emotional impulse is aimed at a religious goal, it loses its passionateness, not by rejecting it but by internally overcoming it. The summit of the ethics of the *Gītā* was the precept of the individual's utmost activity, but an activity devoid of the humdrum everyday attributes.

One of the three paths of the *Gītā* is "the path of love". The text does not dwell on it in much detail, but it is there that the essence of the poem is expressed most explicity. Outwardly, this path might seem easier than the others, for it calls for no

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direct efforts of will or cognition, is open to everybody, denies all preliminary preparations and promises reward to any adept. On the other hand, it is the most difficult of all. Through the idea of "religious love"—*bhakti*—the *Gītā* carried out a reform of the traditional views of Brāhmaṇism. Veneration of the gods was conceived in the *Samhitās* as a ritual, and later it was transformed into a mystically shaded illumination—the ideal of *Upaniṣads*. The *Gītā* set forth an essentially novel concept. This development had, to some extent, been anticipated by the *upāsanā* of the *Upaniṣads*—veneration of the deity based on inner, and not outward, adoration. Nevertheless, *upāsanā* is by no means identical with the *bhakti* of the *Gītā*. It took centuries for the idea of religious duty to undergo a drastic change—salvation through love marks a new concept of religious goal. While not rejecting the other paths, the *Gītā* insisted on the preservation of their spiritual source, for both action and idea lose all meaning when they are not accompanied by faith, i.e. "religious love" (*bhakti*) in the *Gītā's* terminology.

The recognition of the fact that even a sinner is not deprived of salvation was not an expression of the idea of all-forgiveness or tolerance in this case. The point was to establish the priority of the spiritual aspect of religion over the external, material one. Veneration of the gods was to become an end in itself in the religious system, which, against the background of the innovations of the reformation concepts, continued to assert the value of the previous mythology and ritualism. The philosophical interpretation of these as given in the *Upniṣads* seemed to be abstract and dull. The new light that Brahmaṇism had found in the idea of *bhakti* proved in a way stronger than the ideas of the non-orthodox teachings. *Bhakti* became the basic principle of various religious trends in later Hinduism, a principle that was to bring them together for a long time afterwards.

The innovations of the *Gītā* were to exert a considerable influence on the development of religious life in India in the Mauryan epoch. They opened the door of the Brāhmaṇic pantheon for local mythologies. The *Upaniṣads* had prepared this process on the speculative plane, but the *Gītā* found an easily understandable religious expression for it. Bhagavat, the god of the main sect of Hinduism, hardly had anything in common with the hero of the *Mahābhārāta*, and the later Kṛṣṇa, the object of

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Viṣṇuite worship, was connected with his epic prototype merely by his name. Nevertheless, Viṣṇuism would have been inconceivable without the *Gītā*. The decline of the reformation systems and their nearly complete disappearance in a later period can be explained by various reasons, among which, we believe, the introduction of the idea of *bhakti* into orthodox Brāhmanism played a not unimportant part.

The origin of the name of the chief deity of Viṣṇuism still remains a subject of discussion. The central figure in the early layer of this creed is Nārāyaṇa. He was glorified even by the *Brāhmaṇas*, where he was placed even above Prajāpati. Attempts at explaining the etymology of this word have so far proved futile. Its interpretation in keeping with the laws of Sanskrit yields the meaning "refuge (or path) of the people"; according to the "Dravidic theory", it stems from the old Tamil *nīr*, "water". Nārāyaṇa is a deity of non-Vedic origin, linked with the archaic stage of an indigenous religion of the north of India. The rituals that were imported into Vedism together with this name bear traces of primeaval collectivism, where sacrifice (*sattra*) was made by all members of the tribe without any professional priest. Even in the early period, Nārāyaṇa, who had acquired the epithet "Bhagavat" ("divine or adorable one", "lord"), was identified with the *Ṛgvedic* Viṣnu, a variant of the solar deity. This image stems from a local tradition adopted by the Vedic religion in the first centuries of its development in India. The attempts by a number of scholars to endow him with an important role in the early epoch have undoubtedly been inspired by his place in the Bhāgavatist (this term seems to express the essence of the phenomenon better than the conventional "early Viṣṇuite") pantheon proper.

The history of Viṣnuism is essentially a process of gradual incorporation of local gods and cults into the cult legalised by Brāhmaṇism, by identifying them with Nārāyaṇa—Viṣṇu who was regarded as a Brāhmaṇic god. Śaivism also developed in a similar way. The result was that by the post-Gupta period most local religious sects had been incorporated in either of the two main systems and sometimes in both.

Material on Viṣnuism in the Mauryan epoch and in the period immediately after it can be obtained primarily from literary sources. It shows that the mythological image of Nārāyaṇa-

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Viṣṇu (the ultimate identification of these two deities had evidently taken place in the pre-Mauryan period) gained in popularity after its merger with the image of Saṅkarṣaṇa-Baladeva, venerated by many tribes in the north.[199] Even in this early epoch this Brāhmaṇised cult had absorbed a number of indigenous notions, as is indicated first and foremost by the role of Saṅkarṣaṇa. Saṅkarṣaṇa was later associated with the "Universal Dragon", Śeṣa, supporting the earth. The great importance of the worship of snakes in the religion of Indian aborigines is common knowledge. Saṅkarṣaṇa became a link between this element of local religion and Viṣṇuism.

Saṅkarṣaṇa was also the god of agriculture. This second feature of his mythological image does not contradict the first one, for snake is the usual symbol of earthly waters. His attributes are a plough and a pestle for crushing rice. Worship of him was considered indispensable for getting rich crops. Saṅkarṣaṇa himself represents a lengthy process of assimilation of several mythological concepts whose separate stages cannot be traced. Originally the image of Saṅkarṣaṇa was not connected either with snake worship or with agriculture. He appears as one of the deified legendary ancestors of the Kṣatriya clan of the Vṛṣṇis (from the tribe of the Yādavas), members of which were famous for their valour and military feats. However, even before he became a part of the Viṣṇuite milieu, he had undergone a drastic transformation and had become many-faceted and important. This fact is also borne out by his double name. Baladeva was originally the name of the patron of the Vṛṣṇis, while Saṅkarṣaṇa (lit. "drawing a furrow") was a new name expressing a new content. It is noteworthy that the former name gradually receded to the background as the Kṣatriya and Brāhmaṇised traditions grew more and more dissolved in the element of the local cult. This becomes particularly clear from other distinctive traits of Saṅkarṣaṇa : he is the deity of ecstasy, an eminent ascetic and preceptor of the *yoga*, and the master of magic and incantation. The subsequent tantric tradition certainly drew upon the practices of the Saṅkarṣaṇa worshippers.

The incorporation of this god in Viṣṇuism is described by the sources as a *fait accompli*, although initially it was certainly hostile to Brahmaṇism : Saṅkarṣaṇa is the sole deity of the Hindu pantheon to whom the gravest (from the viewpoint of orthodox

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Brāhmaṇism) sin is ascribed, viz. the murder of a Brāhmaṇa. Literature tried to mollify the real meaning of this episode by various interpretations but it failed to hush it up completely. The inclusion of Saṅkarṣaṇa in Viṣṇuism was evidently the result of a compromise between orthodox Brāhmaṇic tradition and a popular local cult.

Judging by all available evidence, the process under discussion had been completed even before the Mauryan epoch. The references to cult shrines show that Saṅkarṣaṇa enjoyed special popularity, surpassing in this respect Vāsudeva, his future wraith and rival. Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya* (II.2.34) describes temples for the worship of Rāma and Keśava (this may be supposed to refer to Saṅkarṣaṇa-Balarāma and Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa), where festivities were held, accompanied by music played on special musical instruments, etc. (Female deities of the Viṣṇuite pantheon are also named, for example, the goddess Lakṣmī.[200]

In another passage (II.2.33), Patañjali directly identifies Saṅkarṣaṇa with Vāsudeva. The spread of this cult in the late Mauryan and Śuṅga periods is confirmed by epigraphy. An inscription in Brāhmī of the first century B.C. from Ghosundi (the area of Udaipur) mentions the erection of a stone wall around the place of worship of Saṅkarṣaṇa-Vāsudeva inside a large temple of Nārāyaṇa.[201] (Worshippers of Saṅkarṣaṇa are also mentioned in the *Arthaśāstra* (XIII.3.)

The fact that the deities of the Viṣṇuite pantheon are mentioned in such an early epigraphic document is very noteworthy. As is well known, apart from the series of Aśoka's edicts, epigraphic documents of that time are very few in number. The fact that the Viṣṇuite subject is richly represented in them can hardly be accidental. It rather suggests that the widespread view that the "late Brāhmaṇic" sects (Viṣṇuism, Śivaism) played an insignificant part in the religious life of that epoch must be revised. It is possible that the inhabitants of the areas less affected by the reformation trends were under the influence of religious systems linked with the orthodox teaching. Furthermore, as shown by the Buddhist texts, even in the centres of Buddhist culture the traditional creeds remained fairly influential.[202]

The generally accepted view that the pre-eminent position among the four hypostases of Nārāyaṇa-Viṣṇu was originally held by Vāsudeva reflects a later stage in the development of Viṣṇuism.

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In the 4th-Ist centuries B.C., the leading part was still played by the cult of Saṅkarṣaṇa-Balarāma. (This view is convincingly proved by S. Jaiswal.) Later, however, this deity lost its importance and, not only ceded its place to Vāsudeva, but imitated his image.

The worship of Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa also originated in northern India. As in the preceding case, his double name stems from two different tribal traditions : Vāsudeva was the deity of the same tribe of the Vṛṣṇis as Baladeva.[303] The cult of Kṛṣṇa seems to have originated among the northern Indian herdsmen's tribe of the Ābhīras. The merger of the two cults took place as early as the first century of the Christian era. At the same time, the cult of Vāsudeva was also recorded at an earlier period, For instance, Pāṇini mentions him as an object of worship (*bhakti*).[204]

The writings of the classical authors, first and foremost Megasthenes, contain extremely valuable data on the orthodox and popular cults in the Mauryan epoch. Megasthenes mentions, for instance, the worship of Heracles in India,[205] certainly meaning some local deity, although the text does not reveal its true name.[206] The question what mythological personage is concealed there is of great interest. Most scholars believe the description to imply Kṛṣṇa.[207] It is noteworthy, however, that the main feature of the god described by classical writers is his supernatural bodily strength and a truly unrestrained bellicosity (Diodorus, II. 39). This is at variance with the traditional image of Kṛṣṇa, who is associated with the idea of love and pastoral games (it was much later in the *Purāṇas*, that he acquired other traits as well). In all likelihood, Megasthenes reflected that stage in the evolution of Viṣṇuism at which one of its central deities (at least in the north-western part of the country) was Vāsudeva, endowed with the features of a bellicose and fearless Kṣatriya.[208]

The legitimacy of such an explanation follows from the data of Pāṇini and epigraphy containing information about the worship of Vāsudeva in this part of India at least in the 2nd century B.C. (As has already been mentioned, the merging of the two mythological traditions led to the blending of the images of Vāsudeva and Kṛṣṇa, with the features of the latter gradually becoming dominant.) Therefore, Megasthenes' Heracles was evidently none else than the northern Indian Vāsudeva, as yet independent of the Kṛṣṇaite tradition proper.[209]

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Megasthenes (*Ind.*, VIII. 4) mentions a very important fact that Heracles enjoyed particular respect among the Indian tribe of *Surasenoi* (Sūrasena), whose main towns were Methora (Mathura) and Kleisobora (evidently, Kṛṣṇapura). Megasthenes' evidence about Mathura as the centre of worship of Heracles-Vāsudeva agrees with the data of the ancient Indian sources.

On the whole, the Seleucid ambassador's reports on the popular cults, which he sometimes distinguished from Brāhmaṇised religion, are often the sole source for the study of these religious trends in the Mauryan period. (True, some classical authors believed the stories about Heracles and Dionysos to be fictitious.)[210]

Actually, not much is known about Vāsudeva proper and his original role. Born as a Kṣatriya, he became the head of a religious sect and later became deified. Subsequently he was endowed with the name of Bhāgavat.[211] It has not been possible as yet to give the exact date of the identification of Vāsudeva with others Viṣṇuite gods. S. Chattopadhyaya believes that, as far back as the time of the first Mauryan kings, the identification of Nārāyaṇa, Viṣṇu, and Vāsudeva was an accomplished fact, at least in some parts of the country.[212]

It is interesting that the *Bhagavadgītā* does not contain any mention of Nārāyaṇa, but, obviously, by Bhāgavat precisely this ancient deity is meant whose features the author of the poem transferred to Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa. In Jaiswal's opinion, one of the main goals of the *Bhagavadgītā* was to blend the old image of Nārāyaṇa with the new ones of Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa.[213] The dating of this development to the Mauryan period is not indisputable, but it was certainly recorded as early as the 2nd century B.C. Highly valuable, and this time incontestible, evidence is available in the famous Besnagar inscription of Heliodorus,[214] which is the earliest known epigraphic document on Viṣṇuism. Its text reads: "This pillar of Garuḍa (*garuḍadhvaja*) [which belonged to] Vāsudeva, the god of gods (*devādhideva*), was erected by Heliodoros Bhāgavata,[215] son of Dion and resident of Taxila, who arrived as an ambassador from the great Greek king Antialkidas to the king Kāśīputra Bhāgabhadra, the Saviour, abiding in prosperity in the fourteenth year of his reign.[216]

The epigraphic data warrant some general conclusions relating to the development of Viṣṇuism. First, they show a relation between Garuḍa and the Bhāgavata tradition. The worship of

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birds certainly had pre-Vedic roots. The inclusion of Garuḍa in the Viṣṇuite pantheon was made easier by the fact that Viṣṇu in the *Ṛgveda* sometimes assumed the appearance of a bird. Later this association became organic and *garuḍadhvaja* became perhaps the most frequent epithet of Nārāyaṇa-Viṣṇu.

Second, the name Bhāgavat (Viṣṇu) is used in this case as a synonym of Vāsudeva, which points to the merging of the two traditions (at least in the north-west of the country—the Brāhmaṇised and the local one.

Third (and this is the most important fact), the inscription points to a wide spread of Vāsudevism at the time, its followers including not only Indians but Greeks as well. The pillars erected in Garuḍa's honour evidently stood near Viṣṇuite temples. It can also be supposed that at that time images of Viṣṇu-Vāsudeva were already sculptured.

Of great interest is Patañjali's evidence (V.3.9) that the Mauryan rulers, craving for gold, had set up statues of gods. It is tempting to link this report with Kauṭilya's data on the building of sanctuaries dedicated to Śiva and Vaiśravaṇa.

The fact that Viṣṇuism exercised considerable influence in the Śuṅgan period and during the reign of the Kāṇvas is attested by the names of some kings of these dynasties : the ninth Śuṅga was called Bhāgavata; the first of the Kāṇvas, Vāsudeva: and the third of them Nārāyaṇa.[217]

The subsequent vigorous activity of the Viṣṇuites in the sphere of religious syncretism, the development of the idea of *vyūhas* and the concept of *avatāras* as a powerful instrument for enrolling ever new local cults into Viṣṇuism, all this is beyond the chronological framework of our subject. We have dwelt only on the developments that preceded the Mauryan and Śuṅgan epochs or took place during then. The religious and philosophical ideas of that period largely determined the gradual transformation of these, initially local, systems into a most popular branch of Mediaeval Hinduism.

As has been mentioned, the theoretical substantiation of the whole movement as outlined in the *Upaniṣads* and elaborated in the *Gītā* was a significant contribution. "The religion of love" which it proclaimed through the lips of Kṛṣṇa did away with sectarian discords and made it possible to combine a most refined conception of spiritual ideal with practical worship of the time.

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Viṣṇu-Bhāgavat became the avowed object of religious love, at the same time symbolising (as explained by the religious and philosophical literature of later periods) the impersonal absolute of the *Upaniṣads* - the universal and indivisible Brahman. The tie between philosophical speculation and current local cult, typical of reformed Brāhmaṇism, found there its fullest expression.

A few words should also be said about Śivaism. Its inclusion in the Brāhmanised pantheon dates from a later time, to be more exact, from the first centuries A.D. Nevertheless, there are no valid reasons to doubt the existence of the worship of Śiva in remote antiquity. There are reasons to suppose that originally he was a Dravidic deity.[218] In general, it should be borne in mind that almost everything we know about the ancient history of India's religion is taken from Brāhmaṇic literature. This makes it necessary to introduce major corrections in traditional ideas regarding the development of cults and religious systems. The moment when an indigenous creed became incorporated into Brāhmaṇism and was legalised by this prevalent trend was presented as the true birth of this creed, although in reality it might have shaped long before, and originated as far back as, the pre-Vedic epoch. Naturally, complete lack of historical evidence makes it very difficult to find out the objective nature of the process, but occasionally some indirect hints make it possible to fill in the gaps. Here again we turn to Greek authors.

The tradition that Indians living in the mountains worshipped Dionysos stems from Megasthenes.[219] In the opinion of some scholars, this report points to Śivaite cults,[220] since Śiva was venerated by many mountain tribes and was even given the epithet *girīśa* "Lord of the Mountains". The ecstatic rites of his worshippers could be interpreted as a Dionysian cult. The processions of the "Dionysians" in north-western India described by Arrian (V.4) and Strabo (XV.1.8) may also be related to Śivaism. The classical evidence of an Indian Dionysos in many respects resemble the local tradition about Śiva (Rudra-Śiva).[221] Dionysos is pictured as long-haired and long-bearded and therefore is called Katapogon, (Diodorus, III; 63); in the *Ṛgveda* and the *Vājasaney-saṃhitā*, Rūdra has the epithet *kapardin*, i.e. "having long tangled hair" (the phonetic similarity between the two terms is interesting).[222] The worshippers of Dionysos anointed themselves with aromatic substances (Strabo, XV. 1.58; *Ind.*, VII.9), the same is told about

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Śiva in the *Vājasaneya-saṃitā* (III.61.58). According to Strabo, the worshippers of Dionysos (XV. 1.58) wore a mitre, while in the description of Rūdra a special turban-like head-dress is mentioned.[223] Dionysian feasts proceeded to the accompaniment of drums and bells (Strabo, XV. 1.58); the Indian tradition reports that Śiva was fond of music, especially the ringing of bells.[224]

Greek authors emphasise the connection between Dionysos and dances : as Arrian maintained, he had taught the Indians the dances of satyrs (*Ind.* VII.8); rites celebrating Śiva were also accompanied by dances. He himself dances and sings in his abode on Mount Kailāsa. The image of the dancing god (*Śiva-Naṭeśvara*) is extremely popular. After the dance he often falls into an ecstasy. (Śiva is even called the patron of the demented, i.e. consumed with passion, *Unmattavināyaka*).

Having come to India, Dionysos gave the Indians wine and taught them to grow vine (Strabo, XV. 1.8 ; Ind. VII.5), and he was considered to be the god of wine-making (lenaios); Śiva, too, is associated with intoxicating drinks. Dionysos acquainted the Indians with various plants: the laurel, ivy, myrtle, beech, and the fig-tree (sukon; Diodorus, III.63); in ancient Indian sources Rudra figured as the lord of the trees (*vṛkṣapati, pādapeśvara*), he was given the names of different trees and was known for his special connection with the *aśvattha* tree (*Ficus religiosa*),[225] the sacred fig-tree; Śiva is sometimes represented in the form of a banyan.

Classical authors credit Dionysos with acquainting the Indians with land husbandry (Dionysos gave them seeds; *Ind.* VII.5), while in the Indian tradition Śiva and Rūdra were the gods of fertility (judging by some texts, Rūdra was the lord of the fields, and Śiva, the owner of the seeds).[226] Dionysos was the first who yoked oxen to a plough (*Ind.*, VII.7). Śiva rides the bull,[227] and carries the effigy of a bull as an emblem;[228] he is called "the lord of cattle" (*paśupati*).

Diodorus reports that Dionysos healed the warriors that had fallen ill, while in the *Ṛgveda* (I. 114.5) Śiva already is described as a healer; Rūdra-Śiva is often called protector from all diseases. According to Arrian (*Ind.*, VII. 7), Dionysos gave weapons to the Indians, and Śiva supplied Arjuna with a special weapon and taught him to use it.[229] Thus, classical evidence about Dionysos corresponds for the most part to the data of Indian texts

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(primarily Vedic and epic) concerning Rūdra-Śiva.

Of course, it is not fortuitous that Megasthenes, and the writers who leant upon his evidence, ascribed to the Indian gods the features and attributes of the most popular deities of antiquity—Heracles and Dionysos. What is striking, however, is the great similarity between the two traditions. This is further proof of the reliability of the Seleucid ambassador's data which calls for their deeper study.

The sources suggest that the Śivaite sect, predominant in that epoch, was the one which later became known as the *Pāśupata*. Its central deity is portrayed as wearing a skin and armed with an iron cudgel; a bull and other animals are shown near him (cf. similar data in Strabo, XV. 1.8).[230] The former two attributes are mentioned in Pāṇini's treatise. Patañjali in the *Mahābhāṣya* also links Śiva with an iron lance (*āyaḥ śūlika*). He speaks about the sect of the Śiva-Bhāgavata (at the time the term "Bhāgavat" was used by the Śivaites, too, and it was only later that it was monopolised by the Viṣṇuites), in which the Pāśupata sect is readily recognised. According to Patañjali (V. 2.76), its members carried an iron trident as a symbol of their divinity. In late Vedic literature, Rūdra acquired some traits of Śiva-Paśupati : he was also covered with a skin, carried a cudgel, lived in the mountains and reigned over the animals. Ecstatic rites were a part of his cult. However, he had by the later Vedic period lost his Vedic nature altogether and retained the name of his Vedic prototype merely as one of his epithets. Ample information on early Śivaism is found in the *Mahābhārata*, but uncertainty regarding the dating of the individual parts of this poem calls for extreme caution in using its data.

The Mauryan period has left no specific epigraphic data on Śivaism. It is from the 1st century B.C. that the sculptural representation of *liṅgam*, crowned by a five-faced head of the god, (which, according to Gopinath Rao,[231] represents the five hypostases of the single Śiva) can be dated. The dedicative inscription gives the name Nāgasiri, which shows the connection between the deity and the cult of the Nāgas that was gradually being absorbed by Śivaism.[232]

We have already cited Patañjali's evidence, from which it is clear that the Mauryas, seeking profit, had set up statues of gods in temples. He mentions this as an instance of the violation of

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a general principle which is that, images of gods could be put up in temples only for worship and not for sale. The list of deities—Śiva, Skanda and Viśākha[233]—reveals not only the popularity of Śivaism but also the existence, in the 2nd century B.C., of sculptured images of Śiva, and, possibly, temples dedicated to him.

Consequently, classical authors' reports and the data of Indian texts (Pāṇini, Patañjali) warrant the conclusion that Śivaism—at least in the form of the Pāśupata sect—was widespread at the time and gradually increased its influence on the Brāhmaṇic tradition.

Some sources clearly point to the existence of other popular creeds and cults (the worship of the Nāgas and the Yakṣas, survivals of animism, etc.). Inscriptions of the Śuṅgan period have preserved data on the performance of Vedic ceremonies (*aśvamedha*) by the rulers of that dynasty.[234] Many Vedic deities are mentioned by Pāṇini and Patañjali.

The problem of the interrelations between Buddhism and the new-Brāhmaṇic trends in the Mauryan-Śuṅgan period is very interesting and at the same time rather complicated (data on a later period are fairly numerous in the sources; moreover, the Hinduism of the Gupta epoch had actually vanquished Buddhism despite the importance of Buddhism in the form of Mahāyāna under the Kuṣāṇas). By the inclusion of local deities in its pantheon Brāhmaṇism sought to restore its former status that had been shattered after the appearance of the reformation schools. This greatly contributed to the growth of its popularity among the lower classes and castes and increased the host of its followers recruited from the new ethnic and cultural sphere (the Dravidic and Muṇḍa tribes of eastern India and Deccan). The *Gītā* was a work of a wide scope and allowed the co-existence of different creeds and cults on one indispensable condition—devotion to Bhāgavat. The worship of this single deity warranted the absolution of all human misdemeanors and improper actions. The *Gītā*, with its striking contradictions, allows the reader to find justification for any action, not thinking twice about its consequences.[235] Evidently, the scholars who consider the poem to be a kind of reaction to Buddhism with its pronounced anti-Brāhmaṇic tendencies are largely right. The ideas of *bhakti* were designed to protect many traditional concepts.

Of course, Bhāgavatism-Viṣṇuism established the ancient

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tradition on a new foundation, taking into account the changed environment. But at the same time, this often looked like a habitual return to old traditions and standards.

The drawing of local deities into the Brāhmaṇised pantheon did not mean recognition of the equal status of their cults in the new religious system. Actually it led to their absorption, and to a renewed importance of the Brāhmaṇas and the Brāhmaṇic caste, though at an early stage the individual local creeds greatly contributed to the shaping of Hinduism as a single and integral whole. In the period of the formation of "neo-Brāhmaṇism", Bhāgavatism obviously enjoyed the support of Vaiśyas and Śūdras (particularly, outside the areas of influence of Buddhist culture). Judging by the *Mānava Dharmaśāstra* (X.23), the Sātvatas, with whom the worship of Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa was particularly popular, were regarded as the descendants of the Vaiśya-Vrātyas, i.e. those representatives of this *varṇa* who did not espouse orthodox Brāhmaṇism. The cult of the goddess Śri Lakṣmī (according to tradition, the spouse of Viṣṇu) became widespread among agriculturists and traders, most of whom were Vaiśyas.

An upshot of the consolidation of Bhāgavatism was the fact that the rulers of a number of northern Indian states in the 2nd-1st centuries B.C.—the Śuṅgas and the Kāṇvas, i.e. direct successors of the Mauryas who were protectors of Buddhism—became fervent adherents of the new religion. According to local tradition, the Kāṇvas were members of the Brāhmaṇic caste (and not Kṣatriya caste, as were the Mauryas). This provides evidence of the growing importance of the Brāhmaṇas in the post-Mauryan period, which was connected with major shifts in the spiritual life of the time. The stand reflected in the *Bhagavadgītā* is interesting in this respect. On the whole, it expresses the idea of religious tolerance (though subordinated to proving the supremacy of Bhāgavat, see (IX. 23.32).[236] At the same time, it stresses the need for a strict observance of the "laws" of one's own *varṇa* (III.35; XVIII.47) and dwells on the duties and obligations of the members of each of the four *varṇas*, whose creation is ascribed to Bhāgavat (IV.13). This tendency received a further elaboration in the later sources of the Viṣṇuite tradition.

The source of the Gupta epoch[237] show a marked increase of the influence of the Brāhmaṇa caste and the decline of the role

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of the two lower *varṇas*. Nevertheless, Hinduism, in the form of Viṣṇuism and Śivaism, while seeking to return to the traditional system of *varṇa* priorities (the data of the *Purāṇas* are very significant in this respect), could not completely abrogate the results (including those of a social nature) of the inclusion of the local cults into the "neo-Brāhmaṇic" system. According to S. Jaiswal, this religion held the door open to members of all the four *varṇas*[238]. The epigraphic and archaeological data of the Gupta and post-Gupta periods show that Viṣṇuism and Śivaism recruited their followers from various social sections, including the Vaiśyas and the Śūdras.

The middle of the first millennium B.C. was marked by considerable increase in philosophical knowledge, primarily by the shaping of the *Lokāyata*, the principal materialistic school of ancient India. The ideas of natural philosophy contained in the Vedic *Saṁhitās* were one of the sources from which it had sprung; in the *Upaniṣads* there are some precepts directly anticipating the *Lokāyata* ideas. There is no doubt that, in the early epoch, the *Lokāyata* was a widespread teaching. This is borne out not only by the fact that the *Upaniṣads* contain precepts close to those of the *Lokāyata* teaching, but also by the fact that this school of philosophy is mentioned in the Buddhist and Jaina sources. It is noteworthy that the *Lokāyata* had its adherents both in the north and the south of the country. Kauṭilya places the *Lokāyata* among the three schools of philosophy which he believed to have possessed real value. The *Lokāyata* is also mentioned in other ancient Indian texts, in particular in Patañjali's grammatical treatise; in his long list of sages, Bāṇa places teachers of the *Lokāyata* alongside the Buddhists, the Jainas, the followers of the *Sāṅkhya* and the "votaries of the *Upaniṣads*" (i.e. orthodox). In the *Milindapāñho*, knowledge of *Lokāyata*, among other philosophical schools, is ascribed to the sage Nāgasena. The mediaeval commentator of the *Mānava Dharmaśāstra*, Medhatithi, identifies the "logicians" (*haitukas*) and the "opponents" of Vedic tradition (*nāstikas*) precisely with the followers of the *Lokāyata* school.

The etymology of the word *Lokāyata* has been interpreted differently. This term is usually translated as "pertaining to people",

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"prevalent among people". That is how Mādhava explained this term. It is interesting that it is interpreted in the same way in the *Divyāvadāna*. Evidently, this reflects the anti-Brāhmaṇic tendency in the *Lokāyata*, whose followers were opposed to the priestly élite and the ideology the latter had propounded. Later, Śaṅkara, for example, asserted that the adepts of the *Lokāyata* were a coarse, uneducated mob. Similar attacks on the *Lokāyata* also occur in other texts. At the same time, a different interpretation of the term *lokāyata* has been proposed; viz. "following the world's ways", "related to the world". This emphasises the materialistic spirit of the doctrine which derives all the categories of reality from the material world (*loka*).

The first reference to the *Lokāyata* teaching may be traced in the *Upaniṣads*. However, the ideas of the early *Lokāyata* are traceable not only in the *Upaniṣads*. The views of some "heretical teachers" (especially Ajita Kesakambalī) bear a certain resemblance to the tenets of this materialistic school.

Its rejection of religious ritual and of the existence of soul after death indubitably shows the affinity between Kesambalī's teaching and the *Lokāyata*. However, it seems impossible to decide on the nature of the reciprocal influences and relations between the two schools, since no texts on the *Lokāyata* of that epoch are extant. Obviously, the "heretical teachers" represented various trends of development of materialistic tradition in ancient India, which found its most consistent expression in the *Lokāyata*.

The appearance of the *Lokāyata* as a full-fledged teaching was made possible only owing to the considerable growth and development of science in ancient India, and above all, of mathematics, astronomy and natural history. The teaching of the elements and their role in the origin and evolution of consciousness would have been unthinkable without some real progress of man's specific knowledge of the processes taking place in nature. The Lokāyatikas invariably emphasised that the object of their study was the world perceived by the senses and that only an entity open to direct analysis and study can be the real object of philosophical deduction. The supernatural is denied, even for the reason that experience gives no evidence of it. In this connection, the views of some followers of the great Indian mathematician and astronomer Āryabhaṭa are of interest, which show obvious

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proximity to the *Lokāyata* stand. According to Bīrūnī, their viewpoint boils down to the idea that only objects open to direct sensation are cognisable: "what is not reached by the sun rays cannot be cognised by sensual perception, and what is inaccessible to the senses cannot be cognised at all".[239] Similar statements occur in Bīrūnī repeatedly. They make it possible to conclude that the *Lokāyata* was closely linked with the various fields of ancient Indian science, the conceptual principles of this materialistic school being apparently shared by a number of renowned Indian scholars of the time.

Statements made by the adherents of the *Lokāyata* are not the only materialistic ideas of ancient India. Such major trends of the philosophical thought of ancient India as *Sāṅkhya* and *Vaiśeṣika* showed certain materialistic trends close to this school. It can reasonably be presumed that they had exercised a certain influence of the *Lokāyata*. *Lokāyata* ideas can hardly be explained by foreign influence, but a parallelism between some conclusions of the *Lokāyata* and certain precepts of Graeco-Roman materialism, especially the views of Epicurus and Lucretius, is conspicuous. This clearly bears out the existenee of certain common patterns in the development of the philosophical thought of Indian civilisation, on the one hand, and of Greek and Roman cultures, on the other. Criticism of religious world view and of the rituals prescribed by religion figures prominently in the writings of the Lokāyatikas. According to Mādhava, the Lokāyatikas maintained that there existed neither paradise, nor the ultimate liberation, nor any soul in the other world. Observance of the duties imposed by *varṇa āśramas*, etc. yields no fruit. A resolute protest against the official doctrine of the sanctity of the Vedas, the need for god-worship, the privileges of the priests and the caste system of society permeates all pronouncement by the *Lokāyata* teachers. Particularly interesting and fruitful for the later evolution of Indian thinking were the Lokāyatikas' arguments against the principle of *karma*, common to the Indian idealistic system. On this point the materialists adduced a host of arguments. If the soul is able to migrate from one body to the next, why does not man remember his former births ? Further, if, after death, man is reborn in a new body, why does not his love for his near and dear prompt him to assume his former appearance ?, etc. Along with the concept of reincarnation, the soul was also denied; for nobody had ever

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seen it, it manifested its presence (if its existence is recognised) in "bodily activity" alone.

The importance of the Lokāyatikas' attack on the concept of *karma* is hard to overemphasise. For reincarnation had been the common thesis of the entire idealistic tradition, irrespective of the professed creed or affiliation with any specific school of ideas. While by calling the authority of the Vedas in question the *Lokāyata* launched a struggle against the orthodox tradition alone, by rejecting the concept of *Karma* it opposed itself to all other religious and religious-philosophical trends. Jainism had fully recognised the idea of *Karma* in its Brāhmaṇic version, Buddhism had introduced a number of quite original elements into the interpretation of this problem, but the general principle of the "theory of rebirth" remained unchallenged. The stand of the *Lokāyata* thus appears as an unprecedented phenomenon in the history not only of ancient but also of mediaeval philosophical thinking in India. The boldness of its precepts seems all the greater, since the basic thesis of this school had been set forth much earlier than the tenets advanced by other philosophical schools of ancient India.

An important place in the *Lokāyata* writings is devoted to questioning the fundamental value of the Vedic texts and their claim as religious revelation. The central thesis of the *Lokāyata*, denying the reality of any immaterial categories, fully explains this stand. It is noteworthy, too, that, engaged in a permanent struggle against Hinduism and the entire religious and orthodox philosophical tradition on which it rested, the materialist thinkers of ancient India could not help realising that their ideological conflict with these concepts, which were so widespread but totally unacceptable to them, was extremely important for the practical application of their doctrine to the conditions of Indian reality. The Lokāyatikas' statements on this issue strike one by their irreconcilable attitude towards the religious institutions of Hinduism. So much so that it is no exaggeration to say that the "anti-clericalism" of Indian materialism was stronger than that of its Greek counterpart.

The alleged "immorality" of the *Lokāyata* and of the Indian materialistic tradition as a whole was a favourite subject of all their critics. The idealist opponents of the Lokāyatikas never tired of alleging that according to the materialistic schools,

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morality was merely a senseless fabrication of the priests, and the true goal of man's life was crude bodily enjoyment. In attacks of this sort, the opponents of the *Lokāyata* resorted to downright aspersion. The tendentiousness of all these reproaches seems obvious today. This has been pointed out by many historians of Indian philosophy, some of whom are extremely far away from materialism. S. Radhakrishnan, for example, noted that a system which had enjoyed tremendous prestige as early as Kauṭilya's time and which had retained its position for over a millennium could not have been merely a code of some primitive immoral hedonism. He qualified statements of this sort as "a parody of the *Lokāyata*" concocted by its enemies. While not denying the role of pleasure in life, the Lokāyatikas never showed themselves to be proponents of an egoistic attitude towards the world around them; on the contrary, they always stressed that normal existence of people is possible only in harmony with nature and its laws, which in itself is incompatible with the acceptance of egoism as the fundamental principle of human behaviour. Moderation was recognised as the greatest virtue and its rules regulated an individual's "natural hedonism". A similar view of ethics was also expressed by some Greek materialists, first of all the followers of Epicurus. It is obvious from what has been said above that the *Lokāyata* has played an important part in the general development of ancient Indian culture. No less obvious is the major role it has played in the progress of the philosophical thinking of mankind. The influence exerted by the *Lokāyata* upon various aspects of life in ancient India was recognised by all who wrote about that system including some of its bitterest opponents.

The *Lokāyata*, with its clear-cut denial of the authority of the Vedas, was not included among the six *Darśanas* (philosophical systems) traditionally linked with the general conceptual principles of Brāhmaṇism and Hinduism. It is highly noteworthy, however, that the most ancient *Darśana*, *Sāṅkhya*, comprises a number of explicit materialistic tenets. Of all the *Darśanas*, *Sāṅkhya* is the nearest to the materialistic trends, even though on the whole it must be described as dualistic, for, according to this school, the materialist and spiritual elements exist as parallels and are independent of each other. However, the main contribution made by this trend of thought to the history of Indian philosophy and Indian culture as a whole lies in its profound and

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all-round elaboration of the teaching of the material essence of the world and the origin of things and living beings through the self-evolution of matter. The significance of this achievement of *Sāṅkhya* as a philosophical system can hardly be over emphasised. There can be no doubt that the emergence and evolution of this school became possible only owing to considerable advances in the Indians' scientific knowledge and changes in economy and public life. The ideas of the *Sāṅkhya*, in their turn, favourably influenced the progress of science. On the whole, there was not a single sphere of ancient Indian culture that had not been influenced by the *Sāṅkhya*.

The central problem in the study of the views of *Sāṅkhya* is the character of the early, or "original", *Sāṅkhya*. The issue is highly involved since no *Sāṅkhya* texts of the time are available. In view of this, the evidence about *Sāṅkhya* contained in Bādarāyaṇa's *Brahma-sūtra* is of paramount importance. It undoubtedly reflects an early version of the system. Furthermore, being its ideological opponent, Bādarāyaṇa placed into relief those specific features of the system which juxtapose *Sāṅkhya* with *Vedānta* and other related trends of Indian thinking, elaborating the idealistic tendency contained in the *Upaniṣads*. Bādarāyaṇa defines Sāṅkhya as *pradhāna- kāraṇa-vāda* (the teaching of nature as the universal cause) or as *acetana-kāraṇa-vāda* (the teaching that an entity possessing no consciousness, i.e. matter or nature, lies at the foundation of the world). Bādarāyaṇa regarded *Sāṅkhya* as the main opponent of *Vedānta*, evidently owing to the influence it enjoyed and its conceptual opposition to the views of the author of the *Brahma-sūtra*.

The fact that *Sāṅkhya* is mentioned in the *Arthaśāstra*, the *Brahma-sūtra*, the epics, Caraka's treatise and the *Manusmṛti* shows that this system had a great number of adherents even as far back as the end of the first millennium B.C. The difference between this early version of the doctrine and the "classical" *Sāṅkhya* (as reflected in Īśvarakṛṣṇa's *Sāṅkhya-kārikā*) can, of course, be traced only sketchily; however, the entire character of the evidence it contains gives one grounds to believe that the materialist strand in the "original *Sāṅkhya*" was particularly strong, which brought it near to the *Lokāyata* and testified to the development of the materialistic tendency in ancient Indian thinking.

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Without going into details of the philosophical concepts of the *Sāṅkhya* school (we judge them primarily from Īśvarakṛṣṇa's treatise, which belonged to a more recent time than the period under investigation), we shall merely touch upon some of their aspects. Unlike the *Upaniṣads*, *Sāṅkhya* declares that the world and its prime cause are not separated by an unbridgeable abyss. Further, according to *Sāṅkhya*, the impetus to motion and self-development lies in the "primary nature" itself, i.e. things and living beings arise naturally in the transformation of *Prakṛti*. *Sāṅkhya* is called *nir-iśvara* (i.e. rejecting the principle of a personified god) and also *svabhāva-vāda*, a teaching of the origin of the world from its material first cause. The process of the formation of the world and its subsequent transformations are treated by *Sāṅkhya* in terms of the theory of causality developed in it. This theory is known as *sat-kārya-vāda*, i.e. the doctrine of the primordial presence of the effect in the cause which engenders it. According to *Sāṅkhya*, each particular act can be brought about solely by a definite cause; the latter is recognised as "essentially indestructible" (the weight of a cock is equal to that of the clay used to make it). The principal achievement of *Sāṅkhya* was a peculiar concept of evolution: *Prakṛti* is gradually transformed from its primary, "undivided" form into the multifarious world of things and creatures, breaking down in the process into 24 elements (the "classical *Sāṅkhya*" also recognised the "25th element", *Puruṣa*. or the principle of pure spirituality; it is worthy of note, however, that *Puruṣa* did not take part in the actual development of nature *Prakṛti*). The "self-movement" of nature is accomplished under the influence of three forces or tendencies—the *guṇas*; the interpretation of the concept of the *guṇas* in *Sāṅkhya* is tinged with elements of spontaneous dialectics.

The fate of *Sāṅkhya* in the history of India's spiritual culture was extremely contradictory. It has already been mentioned that the "original *Sāṅkhya*," popular as it was, has failed to preserve any single text : all that is known about it is based either on indirect evidence or on polemic launched by its opponents. Even Īśvarakṛṣṇa showed a tendency towards bringing *Sāṅkhya* nearer to *Vedānta*, by elaborating the concept of *Puruṣa* and stressing its importance in that system. Later, the ideas of *Sāṅkhya* came to be openly interpreted in the Vedāntic spirit. Nevertheless, the

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general influence exercised by the "original *Sāṅkhya*" on the development of philosophical thought in India seems on the whole to be very considerable and will undoubtedly be the subject of further extensive scholarly investigation.

The ideas which later gave rise to the philosophical schools of *Yoga* and *Vedānta* apparently also originated in the Mauryan epoch. However, they did not take full shape until a more recent epoch, and for that reason the principles of these schools are not discussed here. Likewise, the philosophical literature of Jainism is not touched upon in these pages : the works of the Jaina philosophers that have reached us date from the early middle Ages; the extent to which they represent the views of Vardhamāna-Mahāvīra and his immediate disciples remains unclear.

In conclusion, one can say that though the available sources of the Mauryan epoch provide abundant data on the dynasty's relations with the reformation systems, primarily Buddhism, some of the evidence cited above suggests that there was taking place in that period an intensive development of other religious and philosophical trends, too. A study of these phenomena is essential both for a reconstruction of the general picture of Indian life in the latter half of the first millennium B.C. as also for our understanding of the shifts in ideology and spiritual culture which occurred in the subsequent periods of the country's history.

Notes and References

1. In Buddhist texts *parivrājakas* were understood to be various groups of ascetics, Brāhmaṇic and non-orthodox. Thus, in the *Aṅg.*, *N.* (IV. 35) they were Brāhmaṇa and Annatitthiya. The *Udāna* (VI. 4-5) included diverse categories of Śramaṇas and Brāhmaṇas in the group of ascetics (*paribbājaka*) (*Udāna*, ed. P. Steinthal, London, 1948 pp. 66-67).
2. See A.K. Warder, *Indian Buddhism*, Delhi, 1970 pp. 33-42.
3. See *Sāmaññaphala-sutta. Dīg N.*, I. 47-58; *Sum.*, 1. 160-168.
4. See, for example, H. Oldenberg, *Die Lehre der Upanishaden und die Anfange des Buddhismus*, *Göttingen* 1923; J.G. Jennings, *The Vedantic Buddhism of the Buddha*, Oxford, 1947.
5. For details, see R. Choudhary, *Vrātyas...*, *loc, cit.*
6. N. Dutt, *Early Monastic Buddhism*, vol. 1, Calcutta, 1941, p. 140.
7. A.L. Basham, *History...*, pp. 162-163.

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8. Buddhaghoṣa, *Dhammapada-aṭṭha-kathā*, 1, 390 (ed. H.C. Norman, London, 1906).
9. *Aṅg N.*, I. 33.
10. V.S. Agrawala, *India as Known to Pāṇini*, pp. 381-382. According to Patañjali, the point of departure of these ascetics' concept is : "do not commit acts, do not commit acts, but strive for pacification (peace) as the highest limit" (*mā kṛta karmāṇi makṛta karmāṇi śāntirvaḥ śreyasītayāhāto Maskarī parivrājakaḥ*). This resembles the Ājīvikas' teaching about the futility of actions predestined by the supreme "fate" (*niyati*), and especially, the teaching of non-action (*akriyā*) of one of the heretic teachers, Purāṇa, who was close to the Ājīvikas. In some Sanskrit Buddhist texts the head of the Ājīvikas, Gosāla, is called "Maskarī Gośāliputta" (*Div.*, p. 143), who can be compared with Pāṇini's Maskarī parivrājaka".
11. A.K. Warder, *Indian Buddhism*, pp. 162-164; by the same author, 'On the Relationship between Early Buddhism and Other Contemporary Systems', *BSO(A)S*, vol. 18, pt. 1, 1956, pp. 44-63.
12. According to one scholar, over 70 per cent of Buddhist monks came from towns, fo the most part from Śrāvastī, Rājagṛha, Kapilavastu and Vaiśālī (B.G. Gokhale, 'The Early Buddhist Elite', *JIH*, vol. 43, pt. II, 1965, p. 393).
13. *VP.*, I. 39.
14. B.G. Gokhale, 'The Early Buddhist Elite', *loc. cit.*, p. 394.
15. A.K. Warder, *Indian Buddhism*, p. 184.
16. *Aṅg N.*, III. 57.1.
17. Most classical authors and Indian sources place Brāhmaṇas first, but some authors, for instance, Clemens Alexandrinus (*Stromateis*, I. 305), and some others who followed Bardesanes, whose notes have been preserved in the work of Porphyry (233-306 A.D.) used by later authors, give the first place to Śramaṇas, i.e. they seem to repeat the formula of the Buddhist texts. See R.C. Majumdar, *The Classical Accounts...*, p. 425.
18. Prophyry, *De Abstinentia*, IV. 17. According to Prophyry, philosophers ("theosophists"), whom the Greeks called "hymnosophists," constituted a special order (genos) of the civil community (politeiya) of the Indians, an order which was subdivided into two trends-sects (*airesis*)—Brāhmaṇas and Śramaṇas.
19. Prophyry believed that Brāhmaṇas belonged to one clan (*genos*), and descended from one father and one mother. Śramaṇas, on the other hand were "elected", i.e. "recruited from among those wishing [to master] the religious teaching", and were members of various tribes.
20. In his treatise *Physica*, Stobaeus (6th century A.D.) tells about an Indian embassy to Syria in the 3rd century A.D.
21. *De Abstinentia*, IV. 17.
22. *ibid.*
23. According to R. Thapar, Megasthenes meant different groups of Brāhmaṇas, for his data seem to her to be at variance with the usual description of Buddhist and Jain Śramaṇas (R. Thapar, *Asoka...*, p. 59).

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24. Strabo. *XV.* I. 70.
25. See Schwanbeck, *Megasthenes*, p. 139. This report evidently appeared in a later period. See A. Dihle, 'Indische Philosophen bei Clemens Alexandrinus', in *Mullus* (Festschrift T. Klauser), Münster, 1964, pp. 60-70.
26. For details, see, U.N. Ghoshal, *A History of Indian Political Ideas*, pp. 77-79.
27. For details, see G.M. Bongard-Levin, 'Nekotoriye osobennosti...,' *loc. cit.*, pp. 21-22.
28. A. Sen, 'How Aśoka was Drawn to Buddhism,' *JIH*, vol. 41, pt. 1, 1963, pp. 151-157.
29. See J. Bloch, *Les inscriptions d'Aśoka*), pp. 145-146. The text of the version from Brahmagiri is somewhat different : "For over two and a half years now I have been an *upāsaka*. I was not very zealous for one year. But now it is more than a year since I visited the community and I am very zealous," E. Senart justly noted the importance of this text for distinguishing two stages in Aśoka's religious policy : (1) the period when he was indifferent to Buddhism, though he was an *upāsaka*, and (2) the period after he visited the community and became a zealous Buddhist.
30. See G. Bühler, 'Three New Aśoka Edicts', *Ind. Ant.*, vol. 6, 1877, pp. 149-160, particularly, p. 156; J.E. Fleet, 'The Rummindei Inscription and the Conversion of Aśoka to Buddhism', *JRAS*,, 1908, pp. 471-498; by the same author, 'The 256 Nights of Aśoka" *JRAS*, 1911, pp. 1091-1112; H.C. Seth, 'The Chronology...,' *loc. cit.*, pp. 279-292; see also R. Basak., *Aśokan Inscriptions...*, p. 139 ("I have entered the order"); *A Comprehensive History...*, vol. 2, p. 31 ('he began to live with a Buddhist *saṅgha*').
31. *CII*, I, p. XLIV.
32. P.H.L. Eggermont, *The Chronology...*, p. 68.
33. *CII*, I, p. XLIV.
34. E. Senart, 'Etude sur les inscriptions de Piyadasi,'—*JA*, Ser. 8, t. III, 1884, pp. 446-447; E. Hultzsch, 'The Rupnath and Sarnath Edicts', *JRAS*, 1912, pp. 1053-1059; *CII*, I, p. XLI; L.de la Vallée-Poussin, *L'Inde aux temps....*, pp. 101-104; B.M. Barua, *Aśoka...*, pp. 28-99. According to D. Bhandarkar, the edict refers to the king's life in the community for one year (D. Bhandarkar, *Aśoka*, p. 331). This interpretation is open to serious objections. Despite the convincing explanation offered by E. Senart, some scholars keep to the old interpretation, if with some modifications (*A Comprehensive History...*, vol. 2, p. 31).
35. See *Mah.*, V.34-36; *Sam.*, I.45.
36. *Sam.*, V.34-36; *Sam.*, I.45 (*rāja kira abhisekaṃ pāpunitvā tīṇī yeva saṃvaccharāni bāhirapāsaṇḍaṃ pariganhi, catutthe saṃvacchare Buddhasāsane pasīdi.*) It is said in the *Extended Mahāvaṃsa* (*Ext. Mah.* V.277) that Aśoka supported 60,000 Brāhmaṇas for three years.
37. F. Thomas expressed the opinion that before Aśoka's adoption of Buddhism he had been a Jain, but this supposition is not confirmed by the sources (F. Thomas, 'The Early Faith of Aśoka', *JRAS*, New Series, vol. 11, 1877, pp. 155-234).
38. *Mah.*, V.35-36.

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39. *Sam.*, I.46.
40. According to the *Mahāvaṃsa* (*Mah.*, V.76), "the king set out for the community." The same in the *Ext. Mah.*, (V.320)—*gantvā saṅgham*. In the *Mahāvaṃsa-ṭīkā* '*gantvā*' is explained as follows: "Judging by the *Aṭṭhakathā*, accompanied by a large group of people, he went to the community (into the *saṅgha*)—*gantvā ti Aṭṭhakathāya vuttanayena mahatā parihāragamanena saṅgham ajjhiṃ gantvā* (*Vam.*, I., p. 206). R. Thapar translates: "I have drawn close to the community" and with good reason interprets this in keeping with the data of the Ceylonese chronicles: "drawing closer to the Order may have implied that the king took instruction from Buddhist priests on the Principles of Buddhism (R. Thapar, *Aśoka...*, p. 37). There are reports in the *Divyāvadāna* (p. 387), too, on the king's visit to the Kukkuṭārāma monastery.
41. *Sam.*, I.48, 49; *Ext. Mah.*, V.321.
42. *CII*, I, p. XLVI.
43. See B.M. Barua, *Aśoka...*, pp. 21-22.
44. The worship of the Bodhi tree was evidently one of the objects of his grand tour, called *dhamma-yātā* (R. Thapar, *Aśoka...*, p. 38).
45. It is noted in the Minor Rock Edicts that they were written during the emperor's tour "on the expiry of 256 nights". This evidence has given rise to much debate (for details, see J. Filliozat, *Studies in Aśokan Inscriptions*, Calcutta, 1967, pp. 11-20). Instead of the usual "during the tour," J. Bloch (*Les inscriptions d'Aśoka*, p. 149) translated "after the tour," which lasted 256 days (see also P.H.L. Eggermont, *The Chronology...*, pp. 73-75).
46. For details, see G.M. Bongard-Levin, 'Kalingskaya voina' ['Kalinga War'], *loc. cit*, pp. 33-41.
47. P.H.L. Eggermont, *The Chronology...*, pp. 86-89. The authors of *A Comprehensive History of India*, vol. 2, follow a different dating.
48. *Div.*, pp. 375-382. A tradition is also reflected in the Northern Cycle, according to which Aśoka adopted Buddhism in the seventh year of his reign (see J. Przyluski, *La Légende...*, pp, 413-416; P.H.L. Eggermont, *The Chronology...*, pp. 86-87).
49. See R. Mookerji, *Aśoka*, p. 18.
50. P.H.L. Eggermont, *The Chronology...*, p. 76.
51. D. Bhandarkar *Aśoka*, pp. 73-74.
52. B.M. Barua, *Aśoka...*, p. 216.
53. R. Dikshitar, *The Mauryan Polity*, pp. 276-299.
54. T.L. Shah, *Ancient India*, vol. 2, pt. IV, Baroda, 1939, pp. 302-305.
55. *Age of the Nandas and Mauryas*, p. 230.
56. G. Bühler, 'The Pillar Edicts of Aśoka', *EI*, vol. 2, 1894, pp. 245-274.
57. *CII*, I, p. LIII.
58. In the text: *bābhanesu ājīvikesu*. Some scholars interpreted it incorrectly as "Brāhmaṇic Ājīvikas" (see, for example G. Bühler, 'The Pillar Edicts of Aśoka', *EI*, vol. 2, 1894, p. 272; D. Bhandarkar, *Aśoka*, pp. 155, 319-320). A view was advanced that the mention of Brāhmaṇas and Ājīvikas together is evidence as it were of the closeness of the latter to the

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orthodox system (A.S. Basham, *History...*, p. 149). However, this does not seem sufficiently convincing.

59. Most scholars have translated the words "*babhanesu ājīvikesu*" as "to Brāhmaṇas and Ājīvikas", regarding the former as representatives of traditional Brāhmaṇism. At the same time, a different explanation seems plausible. The edict might have dealt not with Brāhmaṇas in general, but with Brāhmaṇic ascetics alone. The report of the *Samantapāsādikā* (I.45) which mentions that at the beginning of his reign Aśoka bestowed gifts, along with Brāhmaṇas, on ascetics of Brāhmaṇic origin (*brahmaṇa-jātīyapāsaṇḍa*) can be adduced in favour of this interpretation. The edict also speaks of *pāṣaṇḍas*.
60. R. Thapar, *Aśoka...*, p. 139.
61. See SI, pp. 32-33.
62. See SI, pp. 32-33.
63. See (J. Bloch, *Les inscriptions d'Aśoka*, p. 170).
64. For details, see E. Benveniste, *Edicts d'Aśoka....*
65. It is noteworthy that in some versions the phrase *Brāhmaṇa-Śramaṇa* takes the form *Śramaṇa-Brahmaṇa*. It seems unlikely that this indicates a special position of this group. In three versions of the IV MjRE *Śramaṇas* come first, and in one version, *Brāhmaṇas* (J. Bloch, *Les inscriptions d'Aśoka...*, p. 98); in four versions of the VIII MjRE *Śramaṇas* come first, and in two versions, *Brāhmaṇas* (*ibid.*, p. 112).
66. Many authors believe that Śramaṇas should be understood as Buddhist monks, since in the inscriptions they are mentioned alongside Brāhmaṇas. However, this view raises doubts. In speaking about the Buddhist community, Aśoka styles it *saṅgha*; in the edicts Buddhist monks and nuns are called *bhikkhu* and *bhikkhuni*. There existed a special term, *upāsaka*, to designate lay Buddhists. This suggests that *Śramaṇa* had a broader meaning and denoted all those ascetics who opposed orthodox Brahmanism.

    This opposition, *Brahmaṇa-Śramaṇas*, recorded in early texts, also survived in a later period. Patañjali (II.4.12) specially emphasised that *Brāhmaṇas* and *Śramaṇas* were separate sects, hostile (*virodha*) to each other (see V.S. Agrawala, *India as Known to Paṇini*, p. 384; B.N. Puri, *India in the Time of Patañjali*, p. 179).
67. In the *Dīg. N.*, (III.191) the Buddha mentions *Śramaṇa-Brāhmaṇa* as an object to be revered.
68. For details, see G.M. Bongard-Levin, *Istoricheskiye osnovy...*, *loc. cit.*, pp. 106-116.
69. For details, see M. Boyer, 'L' inscription de Sārnāth et ses paralleles d' Allahabad et de Sāñchī,' *JA*, (Ser. 10), t. x, 1907 pp. 119-142; J.Ph. Vogel, 'Epigraphical Discoveries at Sārnāth', *EI*, vol. 8, pp. 166-171; E. Hultzsch, 'The Sāñchī Edict of Aśoka', *JRAS*, 1911, pp. 167-169; J. Bloch, *Les inscriptions d'Aśoka*, pp. 151-153.
70. *...saṃgham bhākhati va bhikkhu vā bhikkhuni vā se pi cā odātāni dusani saṃnaṃdhāpayitu anāvāsasi āvāsayiye* (Version from Allahabad—Kauśāmbī).

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71. For details, see G.M. Bongard-Levin, Āhāle...', *loc. cit.*, pp. 10-20.
72. E. Hutlzsch believed that the Sarnath edict is addressed to the officials of Pāṭaliputra, but the analysis of other versions of the "Schism Edict" shows that the inscription from Sarnath was addressed to the local officials and called for the unity of the *saṅgha* "in Pāṭaliputra and in all provincial towns". This indicates that the decree purported to cover the entire state (see E. Hultzsch, 'The Rupnath...,' *loc. cit.*, pp. 1053-1059; G.M. Bongard-Levin,' Āhāle..., *loc. cit.*, pp. 13-14).
73. R. Basak, *Aśoka Inscriptions*, p. 148.
74. The lay-out of the text of the inscription on the Allahabad-Kauśāmbī pillar (*CII*, I. p. 28, pl. XXII) has led N. Shastri to believe that the edict dated from the last years of Aśoka's reign (*Age of the Nandas and Mauryas*, p. 216). Earlier, the same view was expresed by H. Seth (The Chronology..., *loc. cit.*, pp. 279-292). It is also shared by J. Bloch (*Les inscriptions d'Aśoka...*, p. 152), P.H.L. Eggermont (*The Chronology...*, pp. 115-117, 187-188) and R. Thapar (*Aśoka...*, pp. 44-45).
75. This opinion is shared by a number of scholars. H. Seth believed this edict to be one of Aśoka's latest inscriptions (H. Seth, 'The Chronology...,' *loc. cit.*, pp. 279-293). R. Thapar believes that it was issued at approximately the same time as the "Schism Edict" (*Aśoka...*, p. 37).
76. *buddhaṃ saraṇam gacchāmi, dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi, saṅghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi.*
77. D. Bhandarkar, *Aśoka*, p. 78.
78. *Pryadasi lājā Māgadhe saṃghaṃ abhivādetūnaṃ āhā apābādhataṃ ca phāsuvihālataṃ ca. Cf. Pāli : appābādhaṃ appātaṅkaṃ lahuṭṭhānaṃ balaṃ phasuvihāraṃ pucchati, and Skr. : alpābādhatāṃ paripṛcchay alpātaṅkatāṃ yātraṃ laghūtthānatāṃ balaṃ sukhaviharataṃ ca paripṛcchati* (E. Lamotte, *Histoire...*, p. 256).
79. For details, see V. Bhattacharya, *Buddhist Texts...*; D. Bhandarkar, *Aśoka*, pp. 79-83; E. Lamotte, *Histoire...*, pp. 256-258.
80. D. Bhandarkar, *Aśoka*, p. 81.
81. E. Lamotte, *Histoire...*, p. 256.
82. *vinayo nāma buddhasāsanassa āyu vinaye ṭhite sāsanaṃ ṭhitaṃ hoti* (see V. Bhattacharya, *Buddhist Texts*, p. XIII).
83. *iti kho bhikkhave dhaṃmasandosā vinayasandoso-vinayasandosā dhaṃmasandoso.*
84. *Mah.*, V. 230.
85. See *Age of the Nandas and Mauryas*, p. 243; V. Smith, *Aśoka*, p. 35 ("Aśoka was both monk and monarch at the same time"); V. Smith, *The Early History...*, pp. 168-169; by the same author, 'A Chinese Aśoka', *Ind. Ant.*, vol. 32, 1903, p. 236; According to F. Thomas, Aśoka was a Buddhist monk *CHI*, I, ch XX. pp. 509-510. G. Bühler also believed Aśoka to have joined the *saṅgha* and become a monk (*Ind. Ant.*, vol. 6, 1867, 149-160, specially p. 156). B.Ch. Law thinks that Aśoka accepted the conditions required for joining the community on his own initiative (B.Ch. Law, 'Did Aśoka Become a Bhikkhu?' *IC*, vol. I, 1934, pp. 123-124). According to R. Basak, Aśoka was both monk and king at the same time

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(R. Basak, *Aśokan Inscriptions*, p. XXII). For criticism of this view, see R. Dikshitar, *The Mauryan Polity*, p. 281.

86. *Dīp.*, VII. 351.
87. *Yathāsakaṃ ca te vādaṁ buddhavādo ti dipayuṃ, yathāsakaṃ ca kiriyam akariṃsu yathāruci* (*Mah. V. 230*). A more detailed description of the heretics' actions is given by Buddhaghoṣa, according to whom "they bent their efforts towards destroying the Dharma and the Vinaya" (*keci dhammañ ca vinayañ ca vobhindissāmati paggaṇhiṃsu*; *Sam.*, I. 55).
88. *Mah.*, V. 265.
89. *Mah.*, V. 267.
90. In the Ceylonese chronicles, their authors' tendency to depict the Vibhajavādins as followers of the teaching of the *Theravāda* (the term denoting the Buddhist Canon, compiled, according to tradition, by the elders at the First Buddhist Council in Rājagṛha) is easily discernible. In some Buddhist writings, the *Theravāda* is opposed to the *Ācariyavāda*, the doctrines which were considered heretical.

    In calling themselves Theravādins, representatives of the Ceylonese school sought to stress the fact that they were true Buddhists, pious custodians of the purity of the genuine teaching and staunch fighters against any heretical trends. A. Bareau supposed that the fact that the authors of the chronicles blamed the actions of the non-Buddhists for the internal conflict can be explained by the Theravādins' attempt to discredit their opponents, linking them with the heretics who had joined the *saṅgha*. According to the *Śāsanāvaṃsa*, Aśoka, "have examined the heretics' teaching, banished them – placed them outside the teaching of the Buddha" [*tittiye sāsanā bāhiram akāsi*, (*Śāsanavaṃsa*, pp. 8-9)].
91. *Mah.*, V. 273-274.
92. *Mah.*, V. 277.
93. N. Dutt, *Early Monastic Buddhism*, vol. 2, pp. 6-7.
94. See, for example, *Maj. N.*, III.65; *Mahāvagga*, X.3.1; S. Beal, *Buddhist Records...*, vol. 2, p. 162.
95. *Ibid.*
96. For details on the First Council and the dissent at it, see J. Przyluski, *Le concile de Rājagṛha*, Paris, 1926-1928; E. Waldschmidt, *Zum ersten buddhistischen Konzil in Rājagṛha*, Festschrift F. Weller, Leipzig, 1954, pp. 817-828; A. Bareau, *Les premiers conciles bouddhiques*, Paris, 1955; E. Lamotte, *Histoire...*, pp. 136-143.
97. Highly significant are the events that preceded the council. Tradition has it that Yasa, a Buddhist monk from Kauśāmbī, during his stay in Vaiśālī, noticed grave transgressions of the rules of the *Vinaya* on the part of the local monks and spoke out against the ten points adhered to by the Vaiśālī *bhikṣus* as incompatible with the *Pratimokṣa*. Then, proceeding from the "act of suspicion", the monks practically banished him from the *saṅgha*.
98. For details, see M. Hofinger, *Etude sur le concile de Vaiśālī*, Louvain, 1946.
99. R.C. Majumdar, 'Buddhist Councils', *BS*, pp. 45-54; N. Dutt, *Early Monastic Buddhism*, vol. 2, pp. 34-41; A. Bareau, *Les premier conciles...*, pp. 31-87.

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100. See L. de la Vallee-Poussin, ' "The Five Points" of Mahādeva and the Kathāvatthu', *JRAS*, 1910, pp. 413-423.
101. M. Walleser, *Die Sekten des alten Buddhismus*, Heidelberg, 1927; J.N. Banerjee, 'Schools of Buddhism in Early Indian Inscriptions,' *IHQ*, 1948, pp. 251-258; J. Masuda, 'Origin and Doctrines of Early Indian Buddhist Schools', *Asia Major*, vol. 2, pt. 1, 1925, pp. 1-78; P. Demiéville, 'L'Origine des sectes bouddhiques d'après Paramārtha', *Melanges chinois et bouddhiques*, vol. I, 1931-1932, pp. 15-54; A. Bareau, 'Les sectes bouddhiques du Petit Véhicule et leur Abhidharmapiṭaka', *BEFEO*, t. XLIV, 1951, pp. 1-11; by the same author, *Les sectes bouddhiques du Petit Véhicule*, Saigon, 1955; by the same author, 'Trois traités sur les sectes bouddhiques attribués a Vasumitra, Bhavya et Vinītadeva', *JA*, t. 242, 1954; t. 244, 1956.
102. A.L. Basham, *History...*, p. 148.
103. P.H.L. Eggermont, *The Chronology...*, p. 113.
104. Similar evidence is found in the more recent *Mahābodhivaṃsa* (p. 110): "The king gave them [the heretics] white vestments and banished them from the community."
105. P. Bigandet, *The Life...*, p. 386.
106. *Sam.*, I.61—*tesaṃ setakāni vatthāni datvā uppabhājesi.*
107. See H. Bechert, Aśoka's "Schismenedict" und der Begriff Sanghabheda, Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Süd und Ostasiens, 1961, Bd. V, pp. 18-52.
108. The *Dīpavaṃsa* (V. 50-58) distinguishes two gatherings (*saṃnipāta*) of the community : the first was attended by 60,000 *bhikṣus*. Then the heretics were condemned and banished, and the king destroyed the emblems of the monks who had secretly attached themselves to the *saṅgha*. Unlike the First Council, the Second Council under Tissa, was attended only by orthodox monks—one thousand best *arhats*.
109. Cf., for example, the closing lines of chapters III and IV of the *Mahāvaṃsa*. In the *Vaṃsathappakāsinī*, the Tissa council is compared with the First and Second Councils : *Yathā te dhammasaṅgītiṃ ti yathā te ubho paṭhamadutiyasaṅgīti akaṃsu, tatha Tissathero pi taṃ tatiyasaṅgītim akāsi ti saṃbandho* (p. 241).
110. Similar data are found in Buddhaghoṣa (*Sam.*, I.61). See also *History of Buddhism*, p. 38.
111. A description of *pañcavarṣa* in the country of K'iu-chi (see S. Beal, *Buddhist Records...*, pp. 21-22, 28). Oral tradition about *pañcavarṣa* under Aśoka has been preserved in Fa-Hien and Hiuan Tsang, including even a mention of the inscription (E. Lamotte, *Histoire...*, p. 267).
112. A Bareau, *Les premier conciles...*, pp. 115-118.
113. E. Frauwallner believes the council in Pāṭaliputra to have been merely a local gathering of one of the numerous schools, which, seeking to exaggerate its significance, called itself a council in the chronicles (E. Frauwallner, 'Die buddhistischen Konzile', *ZDMG*, Bd. 102, 1952, pp. 258-259). It is also possible that the Ceylonese chronicles took the *pañcavarṣika* convened by Aśoka for an all-Indian council because such assemblies are not

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practised by Ceylonese Buddhists.

114. I.P. Minaev, *Buddhizm...*, p. 82.
115. P.H.L. Eggermont, *The Chronology...*, p. 210.
116. A. Bareau, *Les premiers conciles...*, pp. 115-118, 132-133.
117. L. de la Vallee-Poussin, *L'Inde aux temps...*, pp. 133-139.
118. I.P. Minaev was one of the world's first students of Buddhism to have objected to the view that the councils were universal, all-Indian ones. He believed that in reality they were simply gatherings of Buddhist sects and it was only much later that the southern tradition began to show them in a different light (for more details, see G.M. Bongard-Levin, O.F. Volkova, 'I.P. Minaev...,' *loc. cit.*, pp. 56-65).
119. G.M. Bongard-Levin, 'K probleme istorichnosti III sobora pri Ashoke' ["The Problem of Historicity of the Third Council under Aśoka], *Indiya v drevnosti*, [*India in Ancient Times*], 1963, p. 129; S. Dutt, *Buddhist Monks and Monasteries of India*, London, 1962, p. 103.
120. N. Dutt, *Early Monastic Buddhism*, vol. 2, p. 207.
121. *A Comprehensive History...*, vol. 2, p. 35.
122. N. Dutt, *Early Monastic Buddhism*, vol. 2, p. 215.
123. J. Bloch, *Les inscriptions d'Aśoka*, p. 153.
124. N. Dutt, *Early Monastic Buddhism*, vol. 1, pp. 289-292.
125. For details, see S. Tachibana, *The Ethics of Buddhism*, Oxford, 1926, pp. 66-67.
126. S. Dutt, *Buddhist Monks...*, p. 103.
127. *Dīp.*, XII.39-54; *Mah.*, XII; *Sam.*, I.63-64.
128. *Age of the Nandas and Mauryas*, p. 270. Interesting data are contained in the late Pāli source *Sâsanavaṃsa*, which drew on ancient Ceylonese chronicles and canonical texts. It gives different locations of Suvarṇabhūmi among others, in Siam.
129. See E. Lamotte, Histoire du bouddhisme indien, Louvain, 1958, pp. 320-339.
130. E. Frauwallner, *The Earliest Vinaya...*, pp. 13-23.
131. S. Paranavitana, 'An Inscription of Circa 200 B.C. at Rajagala Commemorating Saint Mahinda', *UCR*, vol. 20, No. 2, 1962; pp. 159-162; *History of Ceylon*, pp. 125-140; S. Paranavitana, 'Brāhmī Inscriptions in Caves at Mihintale', *EZ*, vol. 5, pt 2, 1959, pp. 231-232.
132. B.A. Litvinsky, *Outline History of Buddhism in Central Asia*, Moscow, 1968.
133. H. Seth, 'Central Asiatic Provinces of the Maurya Empire', *IHQ*, vol. 13, No. 3, 1937, pp. 400-417.
134. R. Basak, *Aśokan Inscriptions* p. XXII.
135. For details, see V.N. Toporov, 'Dhammapada i Buddhistskaya Literatura' ['Dhammapada and Buddhist Literature'],—preface to translation of *Dhammapada* [In Russian]; H. Willman Grabowska, Evolution sémantique du mot "Dharma", *RO*, No. 10, 1934. According to P.V. Kane, "dharma" is one of the those Sanskrit words which frustrates all attempts at rendering its exact meaning in English or any other language.
136. K.V. Rangaswami Aiyangar, *Rājadharma*, Adyar, 1941; H. Losch,

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Rājadharma, Einsetzung und Aufgabenkreis des Königs im Lichte des Purāṇas, Bonn, 1959.

137. P.V. Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra*, vol. I, pp. 1-8.
138. D.R. Bhandarkar, *Aśoka*, p. 72; E. Senart, *Les inscriptions...*, II, p. 332.
139. V. Smith, *Aśoka*, R.K. Mookerji, *Aśoka*, B.M. Barua holds that Aśoka's Dharma was constituted of the principles of lay Buddhism (B.M. Barua, *Aśoka...*, p. 225).
140. J.E. Fleet, 'The Rummindei Inscription and the Conversion of Aśoka to Buddhism', *JRAS*, 1908, pp. 471-498.
141. R. Thapar, *Aśoka...*, p. 149.
142. See J. Bloch, *Les inscriptions d'Aśoka*, pp. 96, 97.
143. See T. Gelblum, 'The Spirit of Aśoka', *EW*, vol. 3, No. 3, 1957, p. 265.
144. R.K. Mookerji, *Aśoka*, p. 68.
145. J. Bloch, *Les inscriptions d'Aśoka*, p. 124; A. Sen, *Aśoka's Edicts*, p. 94.
146. D. Schlumberger, L. Robert, A. Dupon-Sommer, E. Benveniste, 'Une bilingue gréco-araméenne d'Aśoka...', *loc. cit.*, p. 148.
147. D. Schlumberger, 'Une nouvelle inscription...', *loc. cit.*, E. Benveniste, *Edicts d'Aśoka*, pp. 137-159.
148. D. Schlumberger and E. Benveniste translate *euesbeia* as "la pieté"; the revised German translation of the paper by Schlumberger gives "Frommigkeit" (D. Schlumberger, *Eine neue griechische Aśoka-Inschrift, Der Hellenismus in Mittelasien*, Darmstadt, 1969, p. 143. In the Greek text there also occurs the form eusebuntes from the verb eusebeo, "to be pious", "to bear reverential respect to", "to revere", "to honour", etc.). E. Benveniste, leaning upon the Greek version, reasonably interprets the term "Dharma" as "Régle morale et sociale" (E. Benveniste, *Edicts d'Aśoka...*, p. 147).
149. R. Thapar, *Aśoka...*, p. 157.
150. *CII*, I, pp. XLIV-XLII; this fact, essential for the problem of the *Dharma* of Aśoka, is noted by N A. Jayawickrama (Reference to the Third Council in Aśoka's Edicts?' *UCR*, vol. 17, Nos. 3-4, 1959, p. 65).
151. A satisfactory interpretation of this issue depends also on the understanding of the evidence of the edicts regarding Aśoka's ties with the Buddhist *saṅgha* and on the general approach to the emperor's religious policy. Erroneously postulating that Aśoka joined to *saṅgha* and became a monk-king, R. Basak treats the *Dharma* of the edicts from this standpoint, distorting its real nature. The scholar has confused Aśoka's personal adherence to Buddhism with his religious policy in general. Eliot thought that the king had acted as the head of the community in this case (*Hinduism and Buddhism*, vol. I, London, 1957, p. 270).
152. See *Ind. Ant.*, vol. 10, p. 260; *CII*, I, p. XLIX.
153. MiRE from Brahmagiri, *CII*, 1, p. 176.
154. We are following Hultzsch here (*CII*, I, pp. LI-LIV). The text of the *Dhammapada* is after Narada's edition (Narada Thera, *Dhammapada, Pali Text and Translation with Stories in Brief and Notes*, Colombo, 1963); the text of edicts, after J. Bloch's edition.
155. *kiyaṃ cu dhamme ti appāsinave bahukayyāne dayā dāne sacce socaye.*

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Akkodhena jine kodhaṃ-asādhuṃ sādhunā jine. Jine kadariyam dānena—saccena alikavadinaṃ. Saccaṃ bhaṇe kujjheyya-dajja 'ppasmiṃ pi yācito. Sabbapāpassa akaraṇaṃ-kusulassa upasampadā sacittapariyodapanaṃ etaṃ, buddhāna sāsanaṃ. V.N. Toporov translates sabbapāpassa as "non-doing of evil."

156. B.M. Barua, *Aśoka...*, pp. 248-251.
157. N. Dutt, *Early Monastic Buddhism*, vol. 2, pp. 213-217. One of the *sūtras* in the *Dīgha-Nikāya* (III. 180-193) sets forth the following rules for a householder to abide by: kill not living beings, abstain from lying, care for parents, elders, friends, Śramaṇas and Brāhmaṇas, etc.
158. I MiRE.
159. *iyaṃ me hidatikāye, iyaṃ mane me pālatikāye* (See J. Bloch, *Les inscriptions d'Aśoka*, p. 163). The terms "in this world (*hida-loka*) and "in the next world" [*para-(pala) loka*] often occur in the edicts. For example: "I bear happiness to them here (i.e. in this world)"—*idha ca nāni sukhāpayāmi paratrā sa svagam ārādhayaṃtu*—VI MjRE (J. Bloch, *Les inscriptions d'Aśoka*, p. 109). "Those not fulfilling this (the rules set forth by the king) will not attain the heaven and the king (i.e. the king's favour). And if you (addressed to officials—G.M.B.-L.) fulfil this, you will attain the *heaven and pay your duty unto me (the king)*"—*vipatipādayamīne hi etaṃ natthi svagasa āladhi no lājāladhi. manoatileke. saṃpaṭipajamine cu etaṃ svagaṃ ālādhayisatha mama ca ānaniyaṃ.*
160. N. Dutt, *Early Monastic Buddhism*, vol. 2, p. 232.
161. S. Dutt, *Buddhist Monks...*, p. 105.
162. J. Bloch, *Les inscriptions d'Aśoka*, pp. 113-114.
163. See MjRE, J. Bloch, *Les inscriptions d'Aśoka*, pp. 97-98.
164. *Dīg. N.*, I. 141-142, 146.
165. See J. Bloch, *Les inscriptions d'Aśoka*, p. 146.
166. S. Lévi, 'Vyuthena 256', *JA*, t. 17, 1911, pp. 119-126; P. Meile, 'Misa Devehi chez Aśoka', *JA*, 1949: p. 938, J. Filliozat, *Studies...*, pp. 35-55.
167. The *Āpastamba-Dharmasūtra* (II. 7.16) says: "Previously men and gods lived together in this world (*saha devamanusyā asmilloke, purā babhuva*). Then the gods rose to heaven and men remained on earth. Those who will perform the rites as the gods had done it, will come [after death] to live in heaven with the gods and Brahma."
168. The commentary on one of the *Jātakas* (V. 86) explains *misibhūtā* ("commingling") thus: "are in close bodily contact so that they can appear as if holding hands of one another." The commingling of gods and men here is not comradeship in heaven after a man's death but a mixed congregation (*samāgama*) for listening to the important religious discourse (see B.M. Barua, *Aśoka...*), p. 267.
169. *Ibid.*, p. 267.
170. Cf. *Visuddhimagga*, I.10 (attaining the heaven can be done by the practice of virtue—*sīla*).
171. P. Meile, 'Misa...', *loc. cit.*, p. 220.
172. *Aṅg. N.*, I.174.
173. *Dhammapada*, 165.

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174. *Dīg. N.*, II. 100.
175. "Although Buddhism admits the existence of personalities that are more perfect than a common man and calls them saints and gods, these are never placed beyond or above the world and the world limit of life; like the ordinary men they are subject to the laws of the world's evolution and the action of the impersonal motive force of the world." (F.I. Shcherbatskoy, *Filosofskoye utcheniye buddizma* [*Philosophical Doctrine of Buddhism*], St. Petersburg, 1919, pp. 4-5. See also H. von Glasenapp, *Buddhismus und Gottesidee. Die buddhistischen Lehren von der überweltlichen Wesen und Nachten und ihre religionsgeschichtlichen Parallelen*, Wiesbaden, 1954; G. Chemparathy, 'Two Early Buddhist Refutations of the Existence of Īśvara as the Creator of the Universe', *WZ*, Bd. XII-XIII, 1968-1969, (Festschrift für E. Frauwallner), pp. 85-100.
176. E. Lamotte, *Histoire...*, p. 225.
177. Minor Rock Edict from Brahmagiri, *CII*, I, p. 177. An interesting similarity with the text of the *Jātakas* (*J.* VI.151): *esā poraṇā pokiti* (the edict); *esā te porāṇiyā pakati* (Pāli text) see B.M. Barua, *Aśoka...*, p. 229.
178. See J. Gonda, *Loka. World and Heaven in the Veda*, Amsterdam, 1966.
179. See R. Thapar, *Aśoka....*
180. VI MjPE : *hemevā savanikāyesu paṭivekhāmi.*
181. I MiRE, *CII*, I, 176.
182. See J. Bloch, *Les inscriptions d'Aśoka*, p. 161.
183. The *Arthaśāstra* (XII.1) enumerates three types of conquerors and among them *dharmavijayī*—"the righteous conqueror". It is remarkable that the *Dīgha-Nikāya* (III.59) speaks of the conquest of land by means of the Dharma (*dhaṃmena adhivijaya*). Aśoka's stand is thus close to the Buddhist attitude. He recognised the use of force and proclaimed his might (B.M. Barua, *Aśoka...*, p. 235).
184. J. Bloch, *Les inscriptions d'Aśoka*, p. 169.
185. A.M. Osipov, *Kratkiy otcherk...* [*Brief Outline...*], p. 55.
186. *bhaṭamaesu baṃbhanibbesu anathesu vuddhesu hidasukhāye dhaṃmayuttāye apabibodhāye viyapaṭā*—the Kalsi version (J. Bloch, *Les inscriptions d'Aśoka*, p. 104).
187. See Amulyachandra Sen, Aśoka's Edicts, *loc. cit.*, p. 57.
188. VII MjRE (J. Bloch, *Les inscriptions d'Aśoka*, p. 171).
189. *Ibid.*, p. 169.
190. For details, see G.M. Bongard-Levin, 'Pariṣad...', *loc cit.*, pp. 399-409.
191. J. Bloch, *Les inscriptions d'Aśoka*, pp. 112-113.
192. R. Thapar, *Aśoka...*, pp. 162-163.
193. *De Abstinentia*, IV.17.
194. K.N. Upadhyaya resolutely objects to E. Senart's opinion about the influence of Viṣṇuism on early Buddhism (K.N. Upadhyaya, *Early Buddhism and the Bhagavadgītā*, Delhi, 1971, pp. 97-99).
195. It is probable that the first contacts between Viṣṇuites and the adepts of Gosāla took place rather early. Some Jaina sources tie the events of Gosāla's life with temples dedicated to Baladeva and Vāsudeva (see A.L. Basham, *History...*, pp. 44-45). In the Middle Ages, late Ājīkivism

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shows an obvious tendency for a compromise with Southern Viṣṇuism. It is characteristic that Uptala, a commentator of the 10th century explained the word "Ājīvika" as "revering Nārāyaṇa (Viṣṇu)".

196. A.K. Warder, *Indian Buddhism*, pp. 32-33.
197. See S. Jaiswal, *The Origin and Development of Vaiṣṇavism*, Delhi, 1967, pp. 13-14.
198. K.N. Upadhyaya believes that the poem was created between the 5th and 4th centuries B.C. (K.N. Upadhyaya; *Early Buddhism...*, p. 29).
199. See S. Chattopadhyaya, *Evolution of Hindu Sects*, New Delhi, 1970.
200. B.N. Puri, *India in the Time of Patañjali*, p. 170.
201. See *EI*, vol. 10. Appendix, No. 6; B.N. Puri, *India in the Time of Patañjali*, p. 174.
202. The early Buddhist source, *Niddesa*, mentions, for instance, worshippers of Vāsudeva, Baladeva, Pūrṇabhadra, etc. (see *A Comprehensive History....* vol. 2, p. 379).
203. Patañjali (IV.1.114) points unequivocally to the connection between Vāsudeva-Baladeva and Vṛṣṇis. This is also confirmed by epigraphy (*EI*, 10, Appendix, No. 14).
204. See V.S. Agrawala, *India as Known to Pāṇini*, pp. 359-360. For Pāṇini's interpretation of this passage, see R.G. Bhandarkar, 'Vāsudeva of Pāṇini, IV, 3.98', *JRAS*, 1910, pp. 168-170; Ramaprasad Chandra, *Archaeology and Vaishṇava Tradition*, *MASI*, vol. 5, Calcutta, 1920. Since Pāṇini mentions Arjuna together with Vāsudeva, R. Chandra believes that Arjuna had also been deified. A different view is held by U.C. Bhattacharjee and A. Dahlquist (U.C. Bhattacharjee, 'The Evidence of Pāṇini on Vāsudeva-Worship,' *IHQ*, vol. 1, 1925, pp. 483-489; A. Dahlquist, *Megasthenes...*, p. 25).
205. Megasthenes' reports about Heracles and Dionysos in India might have stemmed from earlier writers who had participated in Alexander's campaign. The special place of these gods in the religious life of the Greece of Alexander's time should be borne in mind as well as Alexander's own attitude to the cults of Heracles and Dionysos (see A. Dahlquist, *Megasthenes...*, pp. 29-31). For a criticism of A. Dahlquist's view, see S. Hartman, 'Dionysos and Heracles in India according to Megasthenes : A Counter-argument', *Temenos*, vol. 1, 1965, pp. 55-64.
206. Indicative are Arrian's words (*Ind.* VIII. 4) that Heracles was really an inhabitant of India although he is generally considered a foreigner who had come to the country from outside.
207. This view was first advanced by H. Lassen as far back as 1844, and was later elaborated by W. Ruben (*Krishna, Konkordaz und Kommentar der Motive seines Heldenlebens*, Istanbul, 1943); see also *CHI*, I, p. 408. A Dahlquist's view that in this case Indra is meant seems doubtful (see A Dahlquist, *Megasthenes...*). A. Cunningham and J. Kennedy suggested that Heracles should be identified with Siva (A Cunningham, *Coins of Ancient India* reprinted, Varanasi, 1963, p. VII; J. Kennedy, 'The Child Kṛishṇa, Christianity and the Gujars', *JRAS*, 1907, p. 967).
208. Patañjali's data also testify to the worship of Kṛṣṇa in the 2nd cent. B.C.

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he mentions the *vyūha* of Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa and Saṅkarṣaṇa as army chiefs, which is an obvious indication of the existence of a cycle of legends about Kṛṣṇa; the same is also reported in the *Arthaśāstra* (XIV. 3). These data show the beginning of a merging of the cults of Vāsudeva and Kṛṣṇa (see V.S. Agrawala, *India as Known to Pāṇini*, pp. 359-360; B.N. Puri, *India in the Time of Patañjali* pp. 171-176.

209. Cf. S. Chattopadhyaya, *Evolution...* J. Gonda justifiably doubts that the merging of the two cults took place in Pāṇini's times (J. Gonda, *Aspects of Early Vishnuism*, Delhi, 1969; p. 160).
210. See Strabo, XV. 1.7.
211. *The Age of Imperial Unity*, p. 432.
212. S. Chattopadhyaya, *Evolution...*, p. 35.
213. S. Jaiswal, *The Origin...*, p. 118.
214. *SI*, pp. 88-89.
215. Adept of Bhāgavatism.
216. Some scholars identify Bhāgabhadra with the Suṅga king Bhāgavata, known from the *Purāṇas*. If the data of the *Parāṇas* regarding the reign of Bhāgavata's predecessors are taken into account, the mission must have arrived in 106 B.C. Bhāgavata ascended the throne 61 years after the seizure of power by Puṣyamitra (see G.M. Bongard-Levin, G.F. Ilyin, *Drevnyaya Indiya*, pp. 290-291).
217. See E. Lamotte, Histoire..., p. 431.
218. A. Ghosh, 'Siva—His Pre-Aryan Origins,' *IC*, vol. 2, 1936, pp. 763-771.
219. See, for example, Diodorus, II. 39; Strabo, XV. 1.58. All the evidence of the classical authors on Dionysos in India has been collected by A. Dahlquist. He remarks that, in the whole of the vast Sanskrit literature, there is no god to be identified with the "Indian Dionysos" with certainty (*Megasthenes...*, p. 38). The scholar proposes that the prototype of Dionysos should be looked for among the various images of the Munda tribes.
220. The identification of Dionysos with Siva, originally suggested by H. Lassen, has now been accepted by most scholars.
221. See Sukumari Bhattacharji, *The Indian Theogony* (*A Comparative Study of Indian Mythology from the Vedas to the Purāṇas*), Cambridge, 1970.
222. S. Jaiswal, *The Origin...*, p. 55.
223. Sukumari Bhattacharji, *The Indian Theogony...*, pp. 117-118.
224. *Ibid.*, p. 144.
225. *Mbh.*, XIII.95.
226. Sukumari Bhattacharji, *The Indian Theogony...*, p. 148.
227. *Mbh.*, VIII.24.
228. *Ibid.*, II.25.
229. *Ibid.*, III.40.
230. The tribes of the Sibas (Ind. Śibi, inhabitants of North-Western Indla) wore animal skins, carried clubs, and branded oxen and mules with a mark in the form of a cudgel. Strabo links these traditions with Heracles, whose ancestors allegedly were Sibas. However, in the preceding passage he himself speaks about Dionysos, the Bacchic processions in

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his honour and the relation between Dionysos and the town of Nysa. The data on the Sibas may have originally been related to Dionysos, but received a different interpretation in the source used by Strabo. Arrian (*Ind.* V. 10-13) doubts the truth of the reports on Heracles and the Sibas. He writes that, "if all this seems verisimilar to someone, it may refer to a different Heracles...or he may be a powerful king of a country bordering the land of the Indians on the north". A hypothesis has been advanced on the possible identification of the name *Sibi* (the forms *Śiva*, *Śivi* are also known) with the name of the god Śiva (see W. McCrindle, *Ancient India...*, p. 112). In Pāṇini's grammar, among the tribes of North-Western India, the Śavasa are mentioned alongside the Madra and the Uśīnara—the latter are often associated in Indian sources with the Śibi. Among the northern cities, Pāṇini names Śivapura [in the country of Śibi, Śivi (?)]. See V.S. Agrawala, *India as Known to Pāṇini*, pp. 53, 64.

Curiously, there are cases of obvious similarity between Indian and classical traditions. According to Diodorus (II. 39), Heracles wore a lion's skin, and the Indian sources tell the same about Śiva (R.A. Gopinath Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, vol. 2, Madras, 1966, pp. 229, 235).

231. R. A. Gopinath Rao, *Elements...*, vol. 2, p. 64.
232. S. Chattopadhyaya, *Evolution...*, p. 101.
233. See B.N. Puri. *India in the Time of Patañjali*, p. 170.
234. *EI*, vol. 20, p. 57.
235. See D. Kosambi, *Kultura...*, i zivilizatiya drevnei Indii, Moscow, 1968, p. 122.
236. "Even those devotees who worship other gods, they too worship me (the Bhāgavata) alone..."
237. S. Jaiswal, *The Origin...*, pp. 153 & ff.
238. *Ibid.*, p. 216.
239. See A. Biruni Izbraniya proizvedeniya (Select Works), Vol. II, Tashkent 1963, p. 217.

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INDEX

Abhīras, 125
Abisara, 290
Achaemenids; (Empire, kings), 19, 62, 63, 118, 136
Administration : Central, 247-58; Municipal, 266-71; Provincial, and its characteristics, 271-87
Afghanistan, 81
Africa, 134
Agrammes, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 73, 87, 245
Agrawala, V.S., 294
Agriculture, 117, 120, 121, 123, 141, 149, 157
Ahura Mazda, 62
Ajātaśatru, 58, 59, 61, 191, 252, 272, 347, 360
Ājīvikas (Ājīvika Sect), 17, 18, 81, 93, 98, 332, 341, 344, 345, 346, 350, 354, 363
Ājīvikism, 327, 332, 373
Alasanda, 242
Alexander the Great, 6, 21, 22, 25, 26, 64, 65, 66, 67, 69, 73, 74, 75, 77, 89, 120, 134, 136, 200, 241, 242, 253, 273, 290
Alexandria of Egypt, 27
Alexandrias, 242
Alexandrinus, Clemens, 21, 339
'Aliyavasāni', 34
Allahabad, 94, 270, 348
Allan, J. 137
Allitrochades, 79
Altekar, A.S., 43
Ambala, 43
Ambaṭṭha, Brāhmaṇa, 194, 202
Ambaṭṭha, Sūtta, 202, 203
Āmbhi, 74, 290
Amitrohates, 80
Anabasis, 25
Anāgatabhāyani, 34, 349
Andhra, 131
Andhracottus, 77
Aṅga, 56, 58, 59, 272
Aṅguttara-Nikāya, 34, 144, 193, 280
Animal, 123, 125
Antakana, 5
Antiakidas, 383
Antiochus the Great, 80, 89, 99, 345
Antiyoke (Antiochus), 5
Anuruddha, 61
Aparāntaka, 241
Aparānta, 129
Āpastamba, 31, 143, 175, 192
Arab writers, 26
Arachosia, 19, 20, 242, 243, 244, 368
Aramaic : inscriptions, 17, 63; language, 20; script, 19
Āraṇyakas, 57
Āraṭṭa, 204
Archaeological Survey of Northern India, 5
Ariana, 78
Aridaeus, Philip, 136
Aristobulus, 25
Armenia, 99
Arrian, 20, 21, 25, 62, 126, 129, 130, 171, 241, 253, 257, 263, 266, 385, 386
Arthāśastra, 22, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, 29, 72, 117, 121, 123, 124, 129, 131, 132, 134, 135, 139, 143, 144, 147, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 156, 158, 159, 160, 163, 165, 167, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 191, 193, 196, 199, 239,

249, 250, 251, 256, 260, 261, 262, 263, 266, 267, 268, 269, 272, 282, 288
Āryamanjiuśrīmulakalpa, 66, 67, 69
Āryanisation, 57
Āryans, 129
Āryas, 165
Ashrafyan, K.Z., 179
Asia, 139
Asia Minor, 134
Asiatic Society in Calcutta (Asiatic Society of Bengal 1784), 3
Aśmakas, 56, 70
Aśoka, 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 17, 18, 20, 28, 35, 36, 37, 41, 43, 72, 80, 81, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 124, 127, 131, 133, 137, 239, 240, 241, 242, 244, 245, 246, 248, 251, 252, 254, 255, 256, 260, 266, 272, 273, 275, 276, 279, 280, 283, 334; Mauryan Empire under, 81-87; religious policy of, 11; and Buddhism, 340-362
Aśoka-Sutta, 35
"Aśokan Cycle" 36
Aśokan edicts, 5, 7, 8, 9, 16, 19, 24, 33, 63, 98, 125, 241, 245, 274, 340, 359, 361, 370, 381; dharma of, 362-69
Aśokan inscription, 9, 18, 27, 78, 84, 85, 239, 247, 257, 260, 276, 282, 283, 284, 285, 371
Aśokāvadāna, 35, 90, 91, 92, 95, 96, 350, 354, 358
Aśokā vadānamālā, 36, 82, 96, 97, 273
Aṣṭadhyāyī, 41, 42
Aśvaghoṣa, 36
Atharva Veda, 57
Athenaeus, 21, 78, 80, 81, 345
Avadāna-kalpalatā, 36
Avadānas, 36, 37, 92, 93, 94
Avanti, 56, 82, 127, 272
Āvaśyak-Sūtra, 70, 75
Ayodhya, 70

Babylonian documents, 63, 64
Bādarāyaṇa, 395
Bairat-Bhabru edict, 34, 72
Banerjee, N, 120
Bareau, A, 360
Barua, B.M, 8, 9, 278
Basak, Radhagovinda, 348, 362
Basham, A.L., 354
Baudhāyana, 31, 142
Baveru, 134
Bay of Bengal, 81, 83
"Beloved of Gods", 82, 84, 86, 94, 98, 252
Bengal, 245
Benveniste, Professor Emile, 242
Bhabra edict, 251
Bhagala, 67
Bhāgavadgītā, 377, 383
Bhāgavata, 384; tradition, 383
Bhāgavatism, 17, 389
Bhandarkar, D.R., 86, 276, 343, 348
Bhandarkar, R.G., 7
Bhāradvāja, 272
Bharukachha, 38
Bhaṭṭasvāmin, 149, 152, 159, 261
Bhikkhus, 92
Bhir Mound, 126
Bhojas, 246
Bhuddhghoṣa, 41
Bihar, 57, 122
Bimbisāra, 58, 59, 60, 61, 206, 240, 252, 272, 284, 296, 297, 360
Bindusāra, 36, 79, 80, 81, 82, 90, 96, 137, 248, 254, 255, 273, 345
Bodh-Gayā, 6
"Bodhi Tree," 41
Bombay, 247
Boutta, 339
Brahma-Sūtra, 395
Brāhamaṇas, 57, 72, 73, 85, 100, 130, 142, 143, 151, 158, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 198, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 252, 264, 265, 289, 293, 298, 330, 333, 334, 335, 337, 338, 344, 347, 364, 365, 368, 370, 371, 372
Brahmāṇḍa-purāṇa, 98
Brāhmaṇism, 30, 81, 326, 327,

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328, 340, 341, 343, 365, 366, 372, 376, 378, 379, 385, 389, 394; Brāhmaṇic Circles, 93, 100; Brāhmaṇic culture, 57; Brāhmaṇical literature, 33, 41; Brahmaṇical Schools, 31; Brāhmanisation 57; Brahmaṇists, 337
Brāhmī, 18, 19, 43
Breloer, Berhard, 24, 26
Bṛhadāraṇyaka, 376
Bṛhadratha, 99
Bṛhaspati, 145
Buddha, 18, 34, 56, 60, 91, 190, 203, 243, 260, 287, 293, 295, 297, 300, 333, 334, 335, 336, 342, 349, 338, 341, 354, 357, 365, 366, 369
"Buddha's tooth", 41
Buddhaghoṣa, 59, 81, 128, 142, 170, 174, 194, 199, 203, 240, 264, 268, 274, 281, 291, 292, 299, 300, 301, 341, 346, 349, 355, 357.
Buddhism, 4, 7, 9, 11, 33, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 82, 83, 92, 93, 189, 190, 194, 200, 201, 247, 327, 328, 329, 330, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 339, 340, 363, 364, 397; Aśoka's religiou's policy and, 340-362; monuments, 6.
Buddhist Canons, 163, 287
Buddhist chroniclers, 35
Buddhist Council, 11, 41, 241, 349, 352, 353, 355, 357, 359, 361
Buddhist culture, 33, 35
Buddhist cycle, 81
Buddhist monks, 40, 92
Buddhist Sources (literature texts; writings) 7, 33, 34, 56, 76, 89, 95, 122, 142, 147, 155, 165, 167, 192, 249, 257, 264, 271
Buddhist traditions, 73, 94
Bühler, G; 5, 32, 343
Burma, 87, 134
Burnouf, E, 6
Burrow, T, 27, 28

Caitraka, 199
Callisthenes, 25
Campā, 58, 125, 289
Cāṇakya, 26, 28, 37
Candra, 36
Candragupta, 3, 6, 8, 21, 26, 27, 37, 40, 87, 88, 89, 100, 172, 241, 244, 246, 248, 250, 252, 253, 254, 257, 270, 273, 345; and the formation of the Mauryan Empire, 71-81
Cāṇkya, 73
Carmania, 99
Carpenters, 149
Caste Organisation, 187-209
Cave Inscription, 17, 18
Central Asia, 362
Central India, 42
Ceylon, 27, 34, 38, 39, 41, 76, 82, 134, 247, 274, 361
Ceylonese chronicles, 5, 6, 40, 41, 59, 60, 79, 83, 85, 87, 89, 90, 241, 245, 247, 274, 341, 349, 353, 357, 359
Chāṇakya, 40
Chanana, D.R., 9, 169, 170
Chāndogya Upaniṣad, 375
Chandragupta, 42, 65, 69
Chatterjee, S., 35
Chatterji, C.D., 94
Chattopadhyaya, Debiprasad, 2
Chattopadhyay, S., 383
Chedi, 56
China : 92; Chinese sources, 6; Chinese translations, 36; Chinese travellers, 240
Chital durg, 247
Chola, 247
Christianity, 328, 329
Cicero, 25
Civaravastu, 207, 208, 295, 296, 298
Classical authors, 62, 79, 130, 337, 338, 386
Colebrooke, Henry, 4
Crafts, 117, 137; Craftsman, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 157
Ctesias, 119
Cūlavagga, 34
Cunningham, A., 5, 94, 119
Curtius, 23, 25, 37, 65, 66, 67
"Cycle of Aśoka", 90

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Cyrene, 5, 89, 239
Cyrus, 62
Czechoslovakia, 7

Dandaka, 246
Daoism, 329
Darius, 62, 63
Darśaka, 61
Daśaratha, 5, 18, 97, 98, 248, 345
Davids, T. Rhys, 5, 286
Deccan, 65, 118, 183, 186, 246
Delhi, 16
Demachos, 79
Derret, J.D., 25
Devānāmpiya, 98, 344
Dhammapada, 122, 364
Dharmamahāmātra, 125, 368
Dharmāśāstras, 31, 140, 141, 147
Dharmasūtras, 31, 143, 147, 159, 182, 197, 264, 271
Dharmavijaya, 100; policy, 362-69
Dhauli, 246, 275, 278, 279
Digha-Nikāya, 34, 117, 163, 164, 199, 298, 299, 335, 338, 349, 365
Dikshitar, Ramachandra, 8, 22, 24, 26, 284
Diodorus, 21, 22, 37, 65, 66, 67, 70, 78, 80, 121, 130, 133, 153, 257, 261, 264
Dionysos, 385, 386, 387
Dipavaṃsa, 37, 38
Divyāvadāna, 35, 60, 72, 81, 93, 96, 256, 273, 342, 344
Dulva, 207, 208, 299
Dyakonov, I.M., 155, 180

East India, 42, 128, 133, 273, 274
Economic (economy) development and social structure, 117-38, 291-95
Edicts (*see* Rock Edicts)
Eggermont, P.H.L., 7, 32, 35, 38, 68, 83, 85, 90, 99, 359
Egypt, 5, 80, 134, 239
Elyin, G.F., 162
Employment, 62-76
Engels, 185
Epics, 273
Epirus, 89, 240
Eran (Madhya Pradesh), 136
Eratosthenes, 120
Erythraean, 134
Eudemus, 74, 75, 88
Eudoxus, 134
European Indology, 33
Euthydemos, 99

Fa-hien, 127
Federal Republic of Germany, 7
Feudalism, 178, 179, 185, 186
Fick, R., 33
Firoz Shah, 16
Fleet, J. 5
France, 7
Franke, R, 40
Frontiers of the Empire, 239-247

Gaṇas and Saṅghas in Mauryan Epoch: sources and Problem, 286-91
Gāndhāra, 56, 57, 58, 61, 62, 63, 97, 129, 240, 243, 244, 361
Gangaridae tribes, 64, 66, 67, 245, 246
Ganges valley, 42, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 65, 118, 119, 121, 123, 125, 127, 155, 172, 245, 274, 287, 288, 330, 333, 361
Gautama, 31, 142, 147, 192
Gavimatha, 247
Gayāsīa, 352
Gedrosia, 78
Geiger, W., 38, 39, 60
German Democratic Republic, 7
Ghoshal, V.N., 9
Gīta, 376, 377, 378, 379, 384
Goldsmithery, 130
Gonatas, Antigonus, 89
Gopinath Rao, 387
Gotamī Balaśirī Queen, 148
Graeco-Aramaic bilingual, 63, 241
Graeco-bactrians, 99, 100
Graeco-Macedonians, 64, 74; invasion of, 88
Graeco-Roman materialism, 392
Grantovsky, E.A., 243

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Great Britain, 7
"(The) Great Poem", 377
Great Synod, 191
Greeks, 19, 20, 22, 25, 76, 79, 80, 88, 129, 172, 191, 273, 290, 368, 384, 386; Greek settlement, 241, 242
Gṛhyasūtras, 30, 192
Grierson, G, 5
Guinges, Joseph de, 3
Gunāḍhya, 37
Gupta Empire, (Guptas), period, 8, 37, 160, 259, 266, 270, 285, 302; Gupta epoch, 271, 283, 389; Gupta inscriptions, 140, 143; Gupta texts, 183

Haihayas, 70, 246
"Hall of a Hundered Pillars", 127
Handicrafts, 130, 131
Haradatta, 261
Harappa Culture (Civilisation), 121, 126, 129
Hathigumpha, 70, 71, 122
Hekesander, 80
Hellenistic ruler, 89, 135, 345; Hellenistic point of view, 20; Hellenistic States, 81
Hemacandra, 37, 42, 74, 254
Heracles, 387
Herodotus, 62, 64, 119, 129
Himālayas, 81, 87, 97, 117, 239, 244, 361
Hinduism, 371, 378, 384, 388, 390, 394
Hindukush, 99, 243
Hiphasis, 64
Hired Labour (*See also* Labour), 147, 157, 162, 174
Halland, 7
Hormuz, 134
Hsüan Tsang, 43, 90, 92
Hultzsch, E., 85, 277

Iambulus, 133
Ikṣvākus, 70
Ilyin, G.F., 2, 10, 171, 173, 180, 181
Indika, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 27, 253
Indo-Āryans, 209
Indo-Greeks, 4, 137
Indraji, Bhagawalal, 7
Indus, 62
Industries, 129, 131
Inscription, 4, 5, 16, 17-19, 63 98, 241, 246, 247, 248, 274, 363
"Iron and Towns',, 118
Irrigation works, 123, 156
Iśila, 267
Iśvarakṛṣna, 396
Ivory engravers, 130

Jacobi, G., 60
Jaina ascetics, 339; Jaina Canons, 168; Jaina, philosophers, 397; Jaina sources (literature, texts, works), 33, 72, 79, 88, 90, 125, 172, 207, 254, 257, 289, 292; Jaina sūtras, 59; Jaina tradition, 71, 72, 93, 95; Jainas, 341, 344, 346, 363; Jainism, 33, 189, 327, 328, 337, 397
Jalalabad, 244
Jalauka, 98
Jaṃbudvīpa, 92, 240
Jamna, 16
Jātakamāla, 29
Jātakas, 35, 39, 58, 120, 122, 124, 125, 128, 130, 133, 134, 142, 152, 156, 164, 168, 171, 176, 191, 192, 193, 243, 254, 293, 294, 301
Jatinga Ramesvar, 247
Jaugada, 246, 275, 278
Jayaswal, K.P., 8, 277, 286, 294
Johnston, E., 28
Jolly, J., 22, 23, 24, 27, 140
Jones, William, 3
Junagadh, 247, 272
Junāgarh, 123
Justin, 75, 76, 77, 88

Kabul, 243
Kakavarṇa, 60, 61
Kālāśoka, 60, 61, 69
Kalhaṇa, 98
Kalinga, 17, 71, 83, 84, 85, 86, 246,

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274, 275, 276, 279, 285, 342
Kalingawar, 87
Kaliṅgas, 70, 245
Kalpasūtras, 30
Kamasūtra, 27, 29
Kamboja, 56, 57, 61, 189, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 246, 368
Kanauj, 98
Kandahar, 17, 78, 81, 240, 242, 243, 346, 363; Inscription, 17, 241
Kane, P.V., 9, 28, 31, 147
Kangle, R.P., 9, 22, 23, 160, 166, 167, 173, 175, 184, 195, 197, 259
Kāṇvas, 384
Kapilavastu, 133, 205, 291, 293
Kāpiśa, 62
Karma, 330, 331, 393
Karmakaras, 162-76, 206
Karnataka, 247
Kāruvāki, Queen, 94, 95, 98
Kashmir, 42, 81, 87, 243, 244, 273, 361
Kāśī, 56, 58, 129, 132
Kāśīkā, 201, 302
Kāśīs, 70
Kāsīputra, 383
Kassapa, 332
Kathains, 253
Kathā Saritsāgara, 3, 42, 70
Kathiawar, 247
Kātyayāna, 29, 121, 124, 288
Kātyāyana-smṛti, 146
Kausambī, 35, 38, 43, 125, 126, 133, 267, 348, 352
Kauṭilya, 22, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, 29, 32, 117, 121, 123, 125, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 138, 139, 144, 145, 148, 149, 150, 152, 156, 157, 159, 163, 165, 167, 168, 172, 173, 174 175, 183, 184, 195, 196, 197, 200, 206, 239, 249, 250, 256, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 269, 270, 282, 283, 284, 285, 394
Keith, A.B., 22
Keralaputra, 247
Kern, F., 10
Kern, H., 5, 6, 277
Khaṇḍa, 207, 296, 297, 298
Khāravela, 70, 122
Kharoṣṭhi, 19
Khaśa, 83
Kher, N.N., 9, 182, 184
Khotan, 245, 362
Kish, 64
Koliyas, 168, 206, 290, 292
Kośala, D.D., 56, 58, 59, 190, 193, 240, 299
Kosambi, D.D., 9, 137
Kṛṣṇa, 382
Krishna Rao, 26
Kṣatraujas, 61
Kṣatriyas, 68, 71, 72, 166, 167, 181, 189, 190, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 266, 291, 292, 293, 294, 300, 302, 335, 340; dynasty, 76
Kṣemadharman, 61
Kṣemendra, 36, 37, 42, 90, 96, 97
Kṣudrakas, 201, 290
Kūśīnagara, 291
Kukkuṭa, 92
Kukuṭārāma, 91
Kumārajiva, 358
Kumrahar (Patna), 43
Kuṇāla, 36, 93, 95, 96, 98
Kuṇala-Jātaka, 294
Kuṇāla-Sūtra, 97
Kuṇḍapura, 202
Kuñjarakaṛna, 82, 96, 97
Kuru, 56
Kurus, 70
Kuṣāṇas, 252, 266, 270, 388
Kutupurissa, 160

Lacedaemonians, 171
Labour (Labourers) hired, 147, 157, 162, 174
Laghulovāda: 34
Laghmān, 77, 78, 244
Lalitavistara, 19, 291
Landownership, 138-54
Laṅkāvatārasūtra, 29
Lassen, ch, 6, 79

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Law, B.ch., 33
Laws of Manu, 27, 31, 32, 71, 141 (*See also* Manu)
'Laws of the Karma', 329
Lévi, 5, 7, 34
Licchavis, 58, 59, 191, 198, 199, 201, 207, 288, 294, 297, 298, 299, 301
Lokāyata, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394
Lokāyatikas, 392, 393
Lower castes, 162
Lüders, H., 90
Lumbini, 260

Macedonia, 5, 240, 273
Maccha, 56
Macphail, J., 10
Madhava, 392
Madra, 58, 120
Madrakāras, 203
Madrakas, 199
Madhayadeśa, 240
Maga, 5
Magadha, 10, 32, 34, 35, 37, 38, 56, 57, 58, 60, 69, 72, 76, 77, 82, 87, 118, 119, 120, 122, 133, 154, 155, 172, 176, 191, 193, 239, 248, 251, 268, 272, 274, 287, 289, 296, 330, 333, 334, 348
Magadhalipi, 19
Magas, 89
Mahā-kāvyas, 57
Mahabhārata, 199, 204, 259, 287, 302, 376
Mahābhāṣya, 31, 262, 381, 387
Mahābodhivaṃsa, 66, 72
Mahādeva, 353
Mahākāśyapa, 351, 352
Mahāmātras, 278
Mahānāma, 208, 298
Mahānadin, 61, 68
Mahāniddesa, 128
Mahāparinibbāna-Sūtta, 288, 367
Mahāpadma, 66, 68
Mahārāṭhikas, 143
Mahāsaṅgha, 353
Mahāsaṅghikas, 361
Mahāsaṅgīti, 353
Mahāsena, 38
Mahāsthan (Bengal), 18, 245
Mahāvagga, 34, 120, 122, 124, 168, 291, 297, 333, 334
Mahāvaṃsa, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 61, 62, 274, 355, 357, 359
Mahāvaṃsatika, 39, 40, 68, 70, 72, 73, 74, 81
Mahāvastu, 122, 164, 199, 203, 205, 207, 292, 297
Mahāvihāra, 38, 39
Mahāvīra, 33, 93, 292
Mahāyaṇā, 41, 328, 361
Mahinda (Mahendra), 39, 247
Maithilas, 70
Majjihima Nikāya, 34, 141, 163, 164, 170, 173, 189, 190, 197, 281, 282, 296, 333, 336
Majumdar, R.C. 21
Majumdar, S. 8
Malalasekera, G., 40
Mālavas, 119, 201, 290
Mallas, 56, 59, 198, 199, 290, 300, 301
Mānasollāsa, 261
Mānava Dharmaśāstra, 31, 141, 145, 147, 148, 159, 160, 164, 181, 183, 184, 186, 195, 259, 261, 262, 264, 266
Mānjuśrimūlakalpa, 41
Mansehra, 244
Manu, 141, 161, 192, 259, 260, 262
Manusmṛti, 31
Marshal, J, 42, 118, 128, 136, 270
Marx, Karl, 146, 178, 185
Maski, 247
Materialism, 326
Mathura, 35, 129, 383
Matsya-Purāṇa, 98
Mauryan Chronology, problems of, 87-90
Mauryan empire, fall of, 90-100
Mazdaism, 243
McCrindle, 338
Medhātithi, 147, 170, 260
Mediterranean countries, 133, 134, 328

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Medvedev, E.M., 10, 173, 179, 180, 185
Meerut, 16
Megasthenes, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 27, 29, 62, 72, 79, 80, 118, 120, 121, 122, 124, 125, 129, 130, 133, 135, 137, 139, 153, 171, 172, 190, 191, 194, 195, 196, 250, 253, 257, 261, 262, 263, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 282, 283, 339, 370, 382, 383, 385
Mehendale, M.A., 9, 95
Mendis, G., 38
Meyer, J.J., 26
Michelson, T, 7
Middle Ages, 16, 42, 43, 185, 337
Milindapāñho, 77, 141, 157, 160
Mimāṁsā, 147
Mimāṁsāsūtra, 152
Minaev, I.P., 359
Minayev, I.P., 9
Mitākṣarā, 146
Mitra, C, 94
Mitra, Rajendralal, 7
Mitra, S.N., 8
Mlecchas, 98, 165
Moggali, 351
Mohenjo-Daro, 137
Mohteria, 66
Mokṣa, 330
Mookerjee, R.K., 8, 10, 98
Mookerji, Radhakumud, 277, 362
Monarchies, caste organisation, 187-209
Moranivāpa, 72
Mudrārākṣasa, 71, 72, 75, 79
Munda, 61
Municipal administration (*see* Administration)
Munigātha, 34
Murā, 71
Mysore, 81

Nābhakas, 246
Nāgadāsaka, 61
Nagarjuni Hills, 98
Nāgas, 388
Nahapāna, 143
Nanda, Dhana, 69, 73, 87
Nanda, Mahāpadma, 66
Nandas, 3, 26, 28, 37, 40, 41, 60, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 87, 122, 245, 254, 274
Nandivardhana, 61
Nārada, 144, 145, 147, 164, 165, 169
Nāradasmṛti, 31, 32
Narain, A.K., 99
Nārāyana, 379, 381, 383, 384, 385
Nārāyaṇaviṣṇu, 384
Nasik, 138, 143, 150, 270
National liberation movement, 8
Navada—Toli, 121
Nearchus, 25, 129
Nepal, 35, 83, 87, 244
Nevasa, 130
Nigalisagar Pillar Inscription, 18
Nigalisagar, 244
Nigrodha, 341
Nikāyasaṅgraha, 41
Nikāyas, 34
Nippur, 63
Nirgranthas, 346, 354
Nirvāṇa, 89, 330, 333
Nittite, 286
"Noble Law", 357
Norman, K R., 7
North India, 56, 71, 79, 119, 126, 128, 134, 274; North-East India, 33, 201; North-West India, 35, 42, 43, 74, 75, 82, 88, 90, 128, 154, 200, 203, 241, 253, 290
Northern Black Polished Pottery (ware), 43, 128
Nubia, 286
Nysa, 23, 242

Oldenburg, S.F., 9, 27
Onesicritus, 25
Orissa, 245
Orthodox teachings and cults and Philosophical schools, 369-97
Osipov, A.M., 10
Ossadioi, 203

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Padmāvati, 93
Painted Grey ware culture, 118
Pāli, 34, 119, 122, 141; Pāli canon 35, 202, 300; Pāli Chronicles, 41; Pāli texts, 280
Pālkigundu, 247
Pamirs, 244
Pañcālas, 56, 70
Pañcatantra, 29, 189
Paṇḍukābhayas, 344
Pānini, 25, 26, 27, 29, 41, 63, 118, 119, 120, 122, 130, 138, 140, 156, 157, 158, 199, 203, 241, 243, 256, 273, 282, 288, 293, 302, 371, 382, 387, 388
Pārasamudra, 27
Pargiter, F.E., 70
Pariṣad, 247
Pariśiṣṭaparavan, 36, 37, 42, 66, 69, 72, 79, 80, 98, 254, 256
Paropaniṣadai, 241, 242
Paropaniṣadae Arachosia, 78
Parthia, 99
Parvataka, 74, 75
Paṣarāvati, 243
Pasendi, 190, 240
Paṣkarasārin, 58
Pāśupata, 387
Pāṭaliputra (Patna), 4, 6, 20, 27, 37, 43, 59, 64, 68, 72, 76, 78, 79, 80, 82, 97, 98, 126, 127, 131, 133, 191, 267, 270, 342, 357, 361
Patañjali, 31, 120, 123, 126, 127, 131, 140, 158, 169, 192, 193, 201, 257, 262, 264, 288, 381, 384, 387, 390
Pāvā, 291
Peithom, 88
Perera, L., 40
Persian, Sigloi, 136
Persian gulf, 134
Persian writers, 26
Phegeus, 65
Piodonus, 290
Piyadasi, 81, 82, 84, 94
Plato, 23, 169
Pliny, 21, 25, 62, 80, 133, 245, 257
Plutarch, 25, 37, 66, 77, 78, 128
Poland, 7
Polibius, 99
Political organisation, basic features of 295-302
Political treatises, 259
Porus, 67, 74, 75, 88, 290
Prinsep, James, 4, 5, 16
Prākṛts, 20, 27, 34
Pramnaī, 338
Pran Nath, 179
Prasii tribes, 64, 65, 67 245
Pratiṣṭhāna, 133
Priyadarśī, 249
Property transactions, 146
Przyluski, J., 7, 35, 36
Ptolemy Philadelphus, 5, 80, 89, 134, 245
Pujāvaliya, 41
Pulindas, 246
Puṇḍra, 129
Punjab, 73, 74, 75, 76, 122, 243
Purāṇas, 3, 28, 57, 59, 60, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 81, 87, 89, 90, 98, 129, 273, 282, 382
Purohitas, 183
Puṣyagupta, 246
Puṣyamitra, 98

"Queen's Edict", 95, 98

Radhakrishnan, S., 394
Rājagṛha, 43, 57, 72, 125, 128, 133, 274, 289, 334, 352
Rājatarangiṇī, 42, 244
Rajputana, 118
Rajulamaṇḍagiri, 247
Rampurva, 244
Rapson, E, 7
Ratnagraha, 71
Raychaudhury, H., 27, 59, 84, 100
Reformation doctrines, rise of, 325-40
Religion, 158
Republics: cast organisation, 187-209
Revenue, 150
Ṛgveda, 287, 373, 377, 384
Rhys Davids, T.W., 33
Riṣṭikas, 240, 246

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Robertson, W., 4
Rock Edicts, 5, 8, 72, 81, 84, 85, 86, 89, 94, 95, 179, 243, 246, 249, 250, 251, 255, 256, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 284, 341, 346, 347, 350, 363, 365, 368, 371
Roman authors, 20, 22, 80, 191
Rome, 126, 134, 172
Rube, W, 7
Rudradāman, 123, 272
Rumimindei, 89, 244, 250, 260, 266
Rupar, 43
Rupnath, 280, 284

Sabhā, 247-58
Saddharma, 367
Sahijitya, 270
Saiśunāga dynasty, 59, 68, 353
Sākyas, 123, 133, 137, 168, 198, 201, 202, 203, 205, 207, 288, 290, 292, 293, 295, 300, 302
Saletore, B.A., 9
Śaliśāka, 100
Sāmannaphala-Sūtta, 335
Samantapāsādikā, 41, 257
Samāpā, 267, 276
Sampadi, 91, 93, 97, 98
Samudra, 342
Samyutta Nikāya, 142, 174, 193
Sanchi, 36, 40, 87, 348
Sandracottos, 75, 88, 252
Saṅgha, 35
Saṅkarṣaṇa, 380, 381
Sāṅkhya, 377, 394, 395, 396, 397
Sarnath, 280, 284, 348, 355, 361
Sarvastivādinas, 359, 360
Sāsanavaṃsa, 41, 243
Śāstras, 30, 31
Śāstras, 27, 57, 132, 139, 145, 152, 157, 165, 167, 176, 181, 259, 273
Sastri, H., 100
Sastri, K.A., Nilakanta, 8, 9, 26, 27, 30, 283
Sastri, R. Sharma, 26
Sastri, Shama, 28
Sastri, T. Ganapati, 26
Sātakarṇi Sirigotaniputra, 150
Sātavāhana, 140, 143, 151, 183, 252, 270, 271
Satyaputra, 247
Saurāṣtra, 78, 123, 344
Schism edict, 93, 347, 348, 355, 361
Scylax, 62
Sea voyages, 134
Seleucid, 22, 23, 24, 79, 99, 127, 136, 253, 268, 290, 337, 383
Seleucus, Nikator, 20, 88, 241, 244
Sen, A., 94, 150
Seneca, 25
Seth, N., 72
Shahbazgarhi, 244
Sharma, G.R., 43
Sharma, R.S., 9, 119, 173, 205
Śibi, 129
Siddapura, 247
Silk, 129
Śilpaśāstra, 27
Sīṃhalaṭṭ hakathā, 39
Sind, 88, 118
Sindhu, 243
Sinha, 296, 297
Simhalese Aṭṭhakathā, 40
Sinhalese sources, 39
Śini, 199
Śiśunāga, 59, 60, 61
Śiva, 384, 386, 388
Śiva-Bhāgavata, 387
Śivaism, 381, 385, 390
Śivaites, 387
Skanda, 388
Slave labour (slavery, slaves), 149, 162-76
Smith, Vincent, 6, 10, 40, 61, 98, 251, 255
Smiths, 130, 149
Social (Socio-economic) structure of early India, 154-62, 184, 187
Sohgaura, 18
Solin, 257
Solinus, 21
Somadeva, 3, 37, 42
Somasarman, 99
Sonadaṇḍa, 334
Sopārā, 247

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Sophagasenos, 99
South Arabia, 134
South Ceylonese tradition, 60
South-East Asia, 274
South India, 71, 134
Southern Ocean, 239
Soviet : literature, 10; scholars, 179
Spooner, D, 6, 127
Śramaṇas, 85, 326, 334, 337, 338, 339, 347, 354, 364, 370
Śrautasāstras, 30
Śrāvasti,. 125, 126, 133, 289
Śreṇis, 132, 271
Śrotriyas, 183
"State control Trade", 118
Stcher batsky, F.I., 10
Stein, O., 22, 23, 24, 26, 27
Strabo, 25, 62, 79, 120, 123, 124, 130, 133, 134, 135, 153, 250, 253, 257, 261, 262, 265, 268, 283, 338, 370, 387
Śuddhodana, 207
Sūdras, 66, 150, 151, 157, 166, 167, 173, 175, 176, 181, 189, 190, 194. 196, 197, 198, 201, 202, 204, 208, 293, 389
Sumaṅgalavilāsinī, 291, 298, 299
Śuṅgas, 19, 99, 100, 123, 384
Sunīdha, 191
Sūrasenas, 56, 70
Surāṣṭra, 243, 272
Susa, 63
Sūtrālamkāra, 36, 90, 91
Sūtras, 30, 293
Suttanipāta, 34, 119, 123, 124, 142, 168, 193
Suvarṇabhūmi, 36, 134
Suvarṇagiri, 247, 267, 272, 275, 277
Suyaśas, 98
Śvāphalaka, 199
Syria, 338

Takṣaśilā, 278
Taprobane, 27
Tāranātha, 80 83, 90, 96, 244, 358, 359, 273
Taxation (taxes), 148, 153, 179, 180, 181, 259-66
Taxila, 17, 36, 42, 57, 72, 79, 82, 88, 93, 95, 96, 97, 118, 119, 126, 128, 131, 133, 136, 241, 244, 267, 272, 273, 276, 279, 280, 290
Tenants, 150, 162
Tevijja-sūtta, 338
Thapar, Romila, 9, 89, 96, 100, 154, 252, 262
Theophrastus, 120
Thomas, F.W., 7
Tibet, 35, 76, 243
Timmer, B.C.J., 268
Tiss, King, 5, 82, 247, 351, 357, 359
Tiṣyarakṣita, Queen, 93
Tīvara, 94, 95, 98
Tomara, 298
Tosali, 267
Trade, 117, 135, 137; river trade, 134; trade routes, 133
Transport, 123
Trautmann, T., 27, 28, 29
Tribes, 162, 199; trībal tradition, 154
Trogus, 25, 37, 75, 77, 88, 254
Turnour, G., 5
Tuṣāpa, 246

Udāyibhadra, 61
Udāyin, 59, 61
Uddālaka, 375
Uggasena, 66, 67, 68, 69
Ugrasena, 87
Ujjayini (Ujjain), 38, 40, 43, 58, 82, 98, 118, 127, 128, 129, 133, 267, 272, 274, 275, 278, 279, 280
"Universal, Dragon", 380
United States, 7
Upāli, 207
Upaniṣads, 325, 326, 329, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 378, 388, 390, 395, 396
Upatishastina, 34, 349
Usavadata, 138, 270
Uttar Pradesh, 122
Uttarāpatha, 240
Uttaraviharaaṭṭhakatha, 40
Uvasagadasao, 292

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Vādavas, 380
Vāhika, 201, 203, 204
Vaiśāli, 58, 59, 207, 289, 291, 294, 352, 396, 398; Vaiśāli Council, 353
Vaiṣṇavism, 371
Vaiśravaṇa, 384
Vaiśyas, 124, 157, 166, 167, 181, 189, 190, 194, 195, 196, 204, 205, 208, 291, 293, 294, 298, 334, 335, 389
Vajjis, 56, 298
Vākāṭaka, 143, 151
Vallee-pousin, L. de la, 360
Vaṃsa, 56
Vana, 243
Vanāya, 243
Vanga, 129, 245
Vaṅgalipi, 19
Vārāṇasi, 125, 129, 130, 131, 133, 289,
Varṇas, 165, 187, 188, 189, 190, 204, 208, 270
Vasāti, 203
Vasiṣṭha, 265
Vasiṣtha-Dharmasūtra, 189
Vassakāra, 191
Vassiliev, V.P., 10
Vāsudeva, 199, 381, 382, 383, 384
Vāsudeva-kriṣ' a, 383
Vāsudevism, 384
Vaṭṭagāmani, 39
Vāyu-Purāṇa, 61, 98
Vedānta, 396, 397
Vedas, 326, 372, 374, 377, 394
Vedic literature, 57, 162, 326
Vedism, 325
Vessantara jātaka, 300
Vibhajjavada, 358, 359
Vibhajjavādians, 359, 360
Viddudabha, Prince, 300
Videha, 133
Vidhurapaṇḍita Jātaka, 164
Village community in ancient India, 154-62
Vinaya, 302, 349
Vinaya-Piṭaka, 34, 38, 164
Vinayasaṃukos, 34
Vindhyas, 123
Vīramitrodaya, 261
Viśākha, 388
Viśākhadatta, 37, 79
Viṣṇupurāṇa, 98, 99
Viṣṇu, 148, 167, 379, 380, 383
Viṣṇu-Bhāgavat, 538
Viṣṇudatta, 138
Viṣṇugupta, 29
Viṣṇu-Smṛti, 140, 181 262
Viṣṇuism, 371, 372, 376, 379, 381, 382, 384, 390
Viṣṇuites, 387
Vītāśoka, 36, 354
Vitihotras, 70
Vor obiev desiatovsky, V.S., 10
Vṛṣṇis, 380
Vāsvadāta, 143, 144

Waddell, 23
Warder, A.K., 7
Weavers, 131
West India, 65, 120, 127, 129, 136, 200, 253, 274, 290
Western Asia, 273
Wheeler, R.M., 118, 119
Wilhelm, F. 7
Wilkins, Charles, 4
Wilson, Horace, 4
Woolner, A., 7

Xāndrames, 65, 67
Xenophon, 62
Xerxes, 119

Yājñavalkya, 27, 29, 140, 145, 146, 165, 167, 175
Yājñavalkyasmṛti, 31, 32, 282
Yambul, 78
Yasa, 351
Yāska, 242
Yerragudi, 247, 283, 368
Yoga, 397
Yona-Kadhammarakkhita, 241
Yonaka, 241
Yonas, 189, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 246
Yuga-Purāṇa, 100

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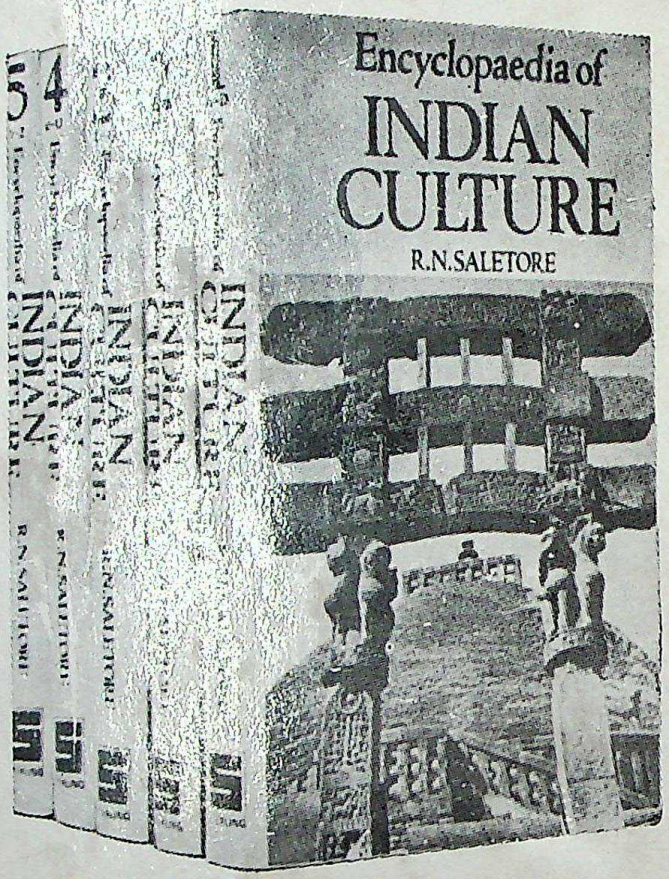

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